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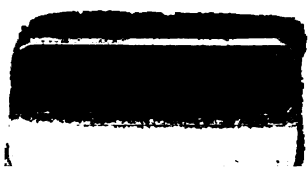
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Ebenings with the Romanists.

EVENINGS WITH THE ROMANISTS:

WITH AN INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER

ON THE

MORAL RESULTS OF THE ROMISH SYSTEM.

22072

BY THE

REV. M. HOBART SEYMOUR, M.A.

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WITH INTRODUCTORY NOTICE,

BY STEPHEN H. TYNG, D.D.

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INTRODUCTORY NOTICE.

THE following work will be found equally striking and important. It relates to a subject which never more justly commanded public attention, and the influences and possible results of which, were never more worthy of serious consideration. The whole Papal scheme, doctrinal and political, is engaged in a vital contest with the powers of Truth and Righteousness. In every ancient seat of its dominion, its influence is waning and passing away. In some new fields of its aggressive operation it seems to be exercising a renewed power of advance. The actual dominion of the Papacy, over the nations of Europe, has gone. It no longer dwells in the affections or the reverence of any people. It is no longer able to exercise a welcome control over any government, however limited. It is no longer the unrivaled power in any territory. Its bulls and edicts are rather ridiculed than revered. Its interdicts and excommunications are thundered forth with no attending fears among the people who used to tremble at their power. The

Pope has not the shadow of temporal power, and hardly the token of influence over temporal power, any where in Europe. France and Austria pretend a respect which neither feels. Piedmont and Spain have burst their bonds asunder in derision. Italy looks on with a hatred but half-concealed. And even Rome furnishes a home within its walls for a despised tyrant only because foreign soldiers are hired to keep guard upon their borders. Miserable is the condition of the Man of Sin, who has now inherited the responsibilities and the guilt of the past ages of popish hostility to the Gospel, and cruelty to the Saints of God. The hour has arrived when, so far as Continental Europe is concerned, he seems the abhorred of men. And the reflecting and instructed mind can not look upon the whole present conflict, among the European powers, without the strong anticipation, if not full conviction, that the Romish Anti-Christ must have its hour of judgment and punishment, before this extending warfare shall have closed. In the mean time, the moral contest between the darkness of Popery and the light of the Gospel is advancing in other lands. It would seem as if the aggressions of Popery had been allowed in more enlightened nations, for the purpose of giving a field to that aspect of the contest which the popular ignorance of older popish

lands could not present. Where Rome has reigned, independent intelligence, and the knowledge of Scripture truth, have been wholly destroyed. She has been careful to have no prepared intellectual antagonist. England and America have opened new fields for a new contest. In those older seats her cruelty will be repaid with fire and blood. In these new ones, her tyranny over the souls of men will be met by the power of truth, and the resistance of accumulated Scripture light. But both in the material contest with exasperated force, and in the intellectual and moral contest with well arranged and fortified truth and holiness, Rome is doomed to perish. Yet the contest must be earnestly waged before she finally falls. In England and Ireland, where this fight is going bravely on, the Author of the present book, who is a valued evangelical clergyman of the Church of England, and completely armed and practiced in this popish war, has been a valuable and important agent. The present work will be found deeply interesting and eminently practical. It brings forward the argument between Scripture truth and Rome in a clear and well adapted form. The simplicity of style, and the fertility of illustration which distinguish it, will carry it home to every conscience and heart. It will be a valuable weapon for the warfare

on our unconquered, and, we believe, unconquerable soil. It will furnish information and strength to many minds, and lead many, in their private conflicts, in victory out from Babylon.' This edition is the *only complete* American edition—omitting nothing but the unimportant dedication to Lord Palmerston, which has no connection with the great subject discussed. The whole consideration of the moral and doctrinal corruptions of the Romish power, contained in the English copy, is here given, without alteration or omission. We trust it will find among American readers the attention which its argument and power so well deserve.

S. H. T.

MORAL RESULTS OF THE ROMISH SYSTEM.

THAT the amount of crime in this country is too high, and the spread of immorality too extensive, is the lament of every good man.

It has been suggested that new means should be tried to keep down the surging of crime, and restrain the deluge of immorality, and—in the subtle spirit of a certain party among us—it is argued, that convents, and nunneries, and confessionals, so long banished from among us, should again be introduced, at least in some modified form, on the principle that as the restraints and motives, which our Protestant Christianity imposes upon crime and immorality, have confessedly failed, there ought now to be trial made of the restraints and motives which are supplied by the institutions of the Church of Rome.

The most natural mode of dealing with this suggestion is an inquiry, as to whether the motives and restraints supplied by the Church of Rome have succeeded so well, or whether they have succeeded at all, in those countries where they have been tried—whether convents, nunneries, and confessionals, have succeeded in suppressing crime, and lessening immorality in those countries where Romanism is the established religion, as well as the popular belief—where all the laws and institutions of the land assist in giving them efficiency, and where therefore they are tried under circumstances the most favorable for their efficient development; in short, whether they

have succeeded in such countries, as well as the principles of our Protestant Christianity have succeeded in England.

It is evident that a problem of this kind should be worked, not on the guesses or opinions of travelers, who seldom see beneath the surface; nor on the statements of public journals, which are generally the organs of a party, but on evidence of the clearest kind—evidence removed from party, and free from prejudice. This evidence is in existence; almost every government in Europe receives regular returns of the amount of crime and immorality in their respective States every year. These returns form a mass of statistical tables, compiled without political partisanship or religious prejudice. The taint of suspicion can not approach them.

To this evidence I invite the attention of calm and thinking men.

In England, we enjoy the noble and ennobling privilege of a **FREE PRESS**. It is the strong right arm that protects our civil liberties, and the broad shield that covers our religious freedom. Its advantages are so vast that we may well bear with its few disadvantages. Among these latter is the publicity which it gives to the amount of crime in this country. It delights in unmasking and exposing the criminal. It allows no delinquency to be concealed. It drags every thing to the light of day, and publishes it to the world: and in so doing it seems to multiply our crimes. When any crime of atrocity and blood is perpetrated, the press immediately details the particulars and denounces the criminal; this is its first appearance. Soon afterward the Coroner holds his inquest, and the evidence is detailed, and a verdict pronounced, and all again is published. This is the second appearance. Some weeks afterward the accused is arrested and evidence is again taken before the magistrates, and he is committed; and now all appears again in the journals of the day. This is the third appearance. And as months perhaps roll by, and the assizes arrive, and the accused stands his trial, under all the solemnities of our tribunals, and the whole details are re-opened, all is again published to the world. This is the fourth appear-

ance. And thus the press seems to multiply our crimes ; one murder seems to become *four*, and to the eye of a stranger the country is at least three times more guilty than it is. On the continent, however, there is nothing like this, and not one crime in ten is ever noticed in the journals.

This renders it all the more necessary that we should work out the problem now before us, neither on the opinion of travellers nor on the publicity of our journals, but on the official and governmental returns of the several countries.

It would be a needless waste of time, and an unnecessary complication of figures to touch on every class of crime. I select one, the highest of all crimes—MURDER.

I shall commence with the criminal calendar of Protestant ENGLAND, and then proceed in order to the several Roman Catholic countries of Europe.

By the tables laid before Parliament, and published by order of the House in 1852, we are in possession not only of the state of the criminal calendar in 1851, but of its state for the ten years preceding. From these tables it appears that the total number of persons committed in 1851 for the crime of murder was 74. And of these committals the results were as follows :

Discharged, no evidence	8
Acquitted on trial	44
Convicted	16
Insane persons	6
	74

Such is the record of crime for 1851, and in this is comprehended every species of murder. Not only deliberate murder, but poisoning and infanticide and parricide. All these forms which are classed under different heads in other countries, are included in these figures. And this number is above the average of the last ten years. The total of committals during that period was 718, and of these the number of convictions was 179, giving for the average each year :

Committals for murder, less than	72
Convictions	18

Such is the record of the crime of murder in all its varieties in England and Wales. The number of actual convictions—of murders proved, is surprisingly small, and although they are perhaps the truest test of the actual amount of crimes, yet, as is usual on criminal statistics, I shall assume the committals here as elsewhere, as the amount to be considered.

Taking, then, the average of committals as the amount of crime, namely 72, and taking the population of England and Wales, according to the census of 1851, at 17,927,609, the proportion of murder is, four to every million of the population.

The transition from Protestant England, to Roman Catholic IRELAND, is intensely painful, as exhibiting the character of a population, under the same sovereign, the same laws, the same institutions, and governed by the same persons. It is possible, as some suggest, that Celtic blood or race may be a cause of the difference so observable. It is possible, likewise, that a mistaken sense of past oppression may have left some baleful traces in the national character. At all events, the results are enough to make good men weep, as they read the record of blood, and more than enough to prove that the moral restraints, which are imposed upon crime by the principles of Romanism, are far less efficient than those imposed by the principles of Protestantism.

A return has been laid on the table of the House of Commons, containing the number of committals for murder in Ireland from July, 1836, to April, 1839. The total was 645; being a yearly average of 235, or no less than THIRTY-THREE murders to each million of the population!

Since that period, however, there has happily been a vast improvement. Large masses of the population have emigrated; great numbers have become Protestant; and a return has been laid before Parliament in 1851, containing the amount of committals for murder during a period of seven years. The total is 914, being a yearly average of 130. This figure, compared with the last census, gives about NINETEEN murders to each million of the population.

The country that comes next in order, is Roman Catholic BELGIUM. Being placed in the same parallel of latitude, it is subjected to the same climatic influences as England. Its civil institutions are characterized by as large an amount of liberty, and the grand distinction between them is that of Religion. There is no nation in Europe more fitted to exhibit the power of those restraints Romanism imposes upon crime; for none is so characterized, by all that is best and purest in the piety of the Church of Rome. The population of Belgium is essentially pious and religious according to the principles of that church.

In the last returns laid before the king by the Minister of Justice, and published in 1852,* we find the number of accused, that is, the number of committals for murder, in each year for a period of ten years:

Cases prosecuted,	.	.	.	537
Cases unknown,	.	.	.	307
				844

This number contains all cases of assassination, poisoning, infanticide, parricide, and generally all the forms, which in England are simply classed as murder. They amount to the yearly average of 84. And this figure compared with 4,337,678, the amount of the population at the last census in 1846, gives EIGHTEEN murders in each million of the population.

In contrasting with this the condition of Roman Catholic FRANCE as to the same crime of murder, we find our task greatly facilitated by the able work of Monsieur Guerry, himself a member of the Church of Rome. This work, "*Statistique morale de la France*," has been approved and adopted by the Royal Academy of Science in Paris.

* "Administration de la Justice civile et criminelle de la Belgique, par M. D. Lentz, Chef de division au Ministère de la Justice, Bruxelles, 1852."

This work on the statistics of crime in France gives the following as the average of yearly crime from the returns of six years :

Murder, before the Civil Tribunals,	298
Assassination,	255
Infanticide,	118
Poisoning,	40
Parricide,	18
Murder, etc., before Military Tribunals,	217*
	941

There was thus a total of 941 as the yearly average of murders in their several varieties. From this list are excluded all cases of manslaughter, where there was no appearance of malicious intention to murder; these amounted on the yearly average to 368 more, so that the foregoing gives the averages only of those crimes, that are properly described as Murder.

This work, however, was published in 1833. And it is important to know the state of France at present as concerns this class of crime. This is contained in the "*Compte general de l'Administration de la Justice criminelle en France, 1851,*" and presented, by command, to the Emperor by the Minister of Justice, and printed by him in 1853. The record of committals for that year is as follows :

Murder, before the Civil Tribunals,	242 p. 48
Assassinations,	369 p. 49
Infanticide,	182 p. 50
Poisoning,	47 p. 51
Parricide,	32 p. 40
	872†

* The only difficulty in this statement of Monsieur Guerry, is that in this last item, being the average of ten years, tried before the Military Tribunals—the cases of manslaughter were included. In the preceding items, all such cases are excluded. It does not, however, much affect the yearly average.

† The number of accused is a little more than the number of crimes given in the beginning of the report, as several persons were implicated in some of the murders.

This gives a total of 872 persons charged with murder for the year, exclusive of those tried before the military tribunals. The omission of these from the returns is not unnatural, when it is remembered that it is a military government, and that such a return of military crimes would not be either discreet or palatable at present. The number may very fairly be reckoned as the same as already given from Guerry, as the average of ten years, namely, 217, which, added to the 872 before the civil tribunals, makes a total of 1089, as the amount of this class of crime in one year in France. This figure, compared with the amount of the population according to the last census in 1846, namely, 35,400,486, gives THIRTY-ONE murders to each million of the population.

We next turn to the empire of AUSTRIA, essentially Roman Catholic—an empire that may well be accepted as the most suitable illustration of the civilizing powers of the Church of Rome, as being an empire where that church is the established church, the almost universal church, an empire where Protestant principles are barely known, and scarcely tolerated—where all the restraints which Romanism imposes upon crime, all her convents and monasteries, all her monks and nuns, all her confessionals and penances are established, sanctioned, and enforced by the laws of the land.

The criminal statistics of this empire are carefully compiled. There is established on imperial authority, an “Imperial Commission for Statistics,” and their duty is to collect these every year. The Secretary of this commission has published last year the results in two volumes, entitled, “Die Statistik des Oesterreichischen Kaiserstaates.”

These volumes contain the official or governmental returns as to the number of murders perpetrated during the last twenty years, and they also give the average numbers of each quinquennial period, so that there is every facility for ascertaining the yearly averages. They are as follows :

Murders tried before the Civil Tribunals	770
Infanticide	124
Murders tried before the Military Tribunals	431*
	1325

Such is the yearly average! There are thus more murders committed—more human lives sacrificed every year in the Austrian Empire, in cold, wanton, willful murder, than fall in some of the fiercest and sternest conflicts of modern warfare. It may be the result of absolute and military government, or it may be the fruit of evil laws and defective institutions; but at all events, notwithstanding all the restraints which Romanism supplies against crime, this Roman Catholic empire exhibits an amount of this highest class of crime, which, compared with the population at the last census, namely, 36,514,466, is nearly THIRTY-SIX murders to each million of the population!

Attention must now be directed to Roman Catholic BAVARIA; next to the Empire of Austria, it holds the highest place among the Roman Catholic powers of Germany; and, being a country essentially governed on the principles of the Church of Rome, and sanctioning by law, and encouraging by patronage all the institutions characteristic of that church, it may justly be regarded as a fitting stage on which to test the efficacy of the principles of Romanism in the repression of crime.

The official and governmental returns are regularly published, giving the amount of crime of every kind as perpetrated in the kingdom.† The returns of five years are now before me, and are as follows:

* The only difficulty is as to this item. The return is not an average, but only a return for one year, namely, 1847. The Secretary states, that owing to the Revolution in 1848, it was impossible to ascertain the precise number since then. This number may, therefore, be taken as the ordinary amount.

† "Beiträge zur Statistik des Königreichs Bayern, Von Hermann, München, 1853."

Simple Murder	249
Assassination	834
Murder by Poisoning	51
Murder of children before birth	181
" " during birth	20
" " after birth	219
	1554

These are the total for five years, omitting all cases of attempts at murder, and all cases of unintentional homicide. They give 811 as the yearly average of this class of crime, and this figure, when compared with the amount of the population, which by the last census in 1849, was 4,520,751, or four millions and a half, gives as a result about SIXTY-EIGHT murders to each million of the population !

And next we turn to Italy. There are no official or governmental returns from Spain and Portugal. A French authority states that in Spain the murders and attempts at murder, amount on the yearly average to about 250 to each million of the population ! But I can not find that his statement has the authority of governmental returns, and our present argument confines itself exclusively to them.

We turn therefore to Italy, and shall proceed in order through its several provinces. It is the land of popes, and cardinals, and prelates, and priests, and monks, and nuns—the land of convents and monasteries—the land, where all the governments are despotic and absolute, and give all their influence and power to the Church of Rome ; the land therefore of all others, the fittest to exhibit the true character of that church in the influence or potency of her principles in the repression of crime, as being the land essentially the most adapted for their favorable development.

The first of the Italian kingdom is **SARDINIA**, once so remarkable for its persecution of the Protestants of its valleys, and now for its progress in free institutions. The returns of crime are given from the police in Alfieri, and cited from him in Mittermaier ; they embrace a period of seven years, all preceding the troubles of the late Revolution, and therefore unaf-

fectcd by them. The total number of murders amounts to 712, which, divided by seven, gives us a yearly average of 101 cases of murder. The number of persons stabbed, poniarded, pistoled, and otherwise wounded was 713 on the yearly average. But the number of actual murders being 101, when compared with the population, which in 1848 was 4,916,084, gives about TWENTY to each million of the population.

The next province of Italy is the two LOMBARDIES, where the amount of this class of crime ascends still higher. The number of murders discovered, together with those the perpetrators of which had altogether escaped, and with the addition of the cases of infanticide, amounted in two years to 450. The details of these will be found in Mittermaier; and the result is a yearly average of 225, a figure which, when compared with the population according to the last census, namely 5,047,472, gives about FORTY-FIVE murders to each million of the population!

The Grand Ducal states of TUSCANY come next in order, and the conspicuous position which their rulers have lately assumed for this province, in prohibiting under civil penalties of fine and imprisonment, the perusal of the Holy Scriptures, and re-enacting the middle-age laws, imposing the penalty of banishment or death on a change of religious opinion, gives a new and peculiar interest to the state of crime within its borders. The returns of all crimes in Tuscany for nine consecutive years, namely, from 1830 to 1838 will be found in Mittermaier. The following are the murders :

Murder with robbery		26
Premeditated Murder		66
Voluntary Murder		305
Assassination		233
Parricide		24
Murder of wives by husbands, and <i>vice versa</i>		27
Murder by poison		22
Infanticide		54

This number distributed through nine years, gives no less than 84 as the yearly average. The amount of the population of Tuscany in 1841 was 1,489,000, so that the amount of this class of crime, is about FIFTY-SIX to each million of the population !

And next we arrive at the PAPAL STATES—ROME. It is far from easy to obtain accurate and precise information upon any subject in these States of the Church. Happily, however, as concerns our present inquiry, the British government deputed Dr. Bowring to proceed to Rome, and to procure for them statistical information respecting central Italy, for commercial purposes. The report was laid by Lord Palmerston on the table of the House of Commons, and has been printed by order of Parliament. In that report is a return of the number of persons imprisoned for murder in the Papal states, at the period of Dr. Bowring's visit. The amount was 580. These were persons, some incarcerated after trial, undergoing their sentences, and some awaiting their trial. And of these it may be probably said, that one third were perpetrated during the year; this would give for the Roman States 193 as the murders of one year, and to these are to be added the murders in the provinces of Macerata and Ferrara, as detailed in the returns, namely 146. This gives us the proximate number 339. This is the figure with which we are to deal, and comparing this figure with the population of the Papal states, which, in 1846, was 2,908,115, the result gives above ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTEEN to each million of the population !

The island of SICILY comes next in review, and presents a state of crime not much better than the preceding. In the returns for murder of various kinds, for the year 1833, they amount to 176, and from the returns of several years it is stated by Mittermaier that they ranged from 160 as the lowest, to 188 as the highest, that is, that 174 may be taken as the yearly average. The population in the year 1834 was 1,936,033, or less than two millions, so that the

yearly average of murders is about **NINETY** to each million of the population !

But the last and darkest picture of crime is **NAPLES**. A veil might well be drawn over so terrible and revolting a record, but the revelations of Mr. **GLADSTONE** respecting that country have prepared the mind of England for the truth. The following is the criminal calendar for one year, as given in Mittermaier, and that too in 1832, long before the scenes of the last Revolution :

Parricide	5
Murder of wives by husbands, and <i>vice versa</i>	37
Infanticide*	15
Murder of relations	21
Poisoning	5
Premeditated Murder	134
Intentional homicide	663
Assassination	89
Murder combined with robbery	75
“ “ “ adultery	1
	1045

Such seems the ordinary list of crime in Naples. The amount of population exclusive of Sicily is about 6,066,900 ; at that period it was little more than five millions. But, taking it at the highest figure, it will give about **ONE HUNDRED AND SEVENTY-FOUR** murders to each million of the population !

The yearly average of murders in all Italy—in that land where the Church of Rome is supreme, and without a rival, is 1,968, so that every year there are left murdered in cold blood more men and women and children than often fall in our most blood-stained battle-fields. And this in the land of convents and nunneries and confessionals—in the land where, of all else on the wide surface of God's creation, we might expect the full and happy

* The actual number of cases of infanticide was 84. The preceding figure gives the convictions, but 84 children were murdered !

development of all the restraints which the Church of Rome imposes upon crime—in the land where priests and monks and nuns exceed an hundred and twenty thousand! Mr. WHITEHEAD informs us that at Assissi there are twelve convents; at Foligno, twelve for monks, and eight for nuns; at Spoleto, twenty-two; at Terni, five; at Narni, seven for monks, and five for nuns. It appears too that at Perugia, there are thirty-four, while in Rome there are sixty-four for monks, and fifty for nuns! And yet it is in this very district that the murders amount to one hundred and thirteen to the million of the population! while, in Naples and Sicily there are, or rather were, a few years ago, 16,455 monks, and 13,000 nuns, the largest number in any country in the world, and *there* there is also the largest proportion of crime to be found in any one country on the whole surface of God's creation!

The following are the results in all the several Roman Catholic countries, as contrasted with Protestant England:

Roman Catholic Ireland	. . .	19 to the million.	
“ “ Belgium	. . .	18	“ “
“ “ France	. . .	31	“ “
“ “ Austria	. . .	36	“ “
“ “ Bavaria	. . .	68	“ “
“ “ Sardinia	. . .	20	“ “
“ “ Lombardy	. . .	45	“ “
“ “ Tuscany	. . .	56	“ “
The Papal States		113	“ “
Roman Catholic Sicily		90	“ “
“ “ Naples		174	“ “
PROTESTANT ENGLAND		4	“ “

I ask—are not these figures eloquent?

One thing at least is certain, as derived from these figures, official and governmental as they are, namely, that convents and nunneries, and confessionals, and all such institutions of Romanism have failed, in those countries, where they have been tried under the circumstances most favorable for their development—have failed wretchedly and signally. And the

argument, that we ought to introduce into this country the institutions of Romanism even in a modified form, as more efficient in repressing crime than the principles and motives of Protestant Christianity, is not only answered, but **ANNIHILATED**.

It may, however, be argued that these disastrous and horrifying results in Roman Catholic countries are not to be attributed to the religion of Rome, but to bad laws, evil institutions, and unwise legislation. This is just and true in a measure. The free and noble institutions of Protestant England—her wise and equitable laws—her civil freedom and her religious liberty—pervaded as they are by the moral principles of her Protestant Christianity, all tend to the suppression of crime, while in Roman Catholic lands, the despotism of absolute power—the military government that with gauntleted hand dashes the printing-press in pieces, or holds it in chains—the sacerdotal system, which forges the Procrustean bed of a state religion, on which every man must lie, whatever be his stature and have his head and feet chopped to fit it—all these combine to engender crime; and while the people are left without justice against oppression—without redress in their wrongs, it is not wonderful that they take redress into their own hands, and in a spirit of wild justice vindicate their own wrongs, and avenge themselves. But still it may well be asked, and it is a cogent and awkward question, how it comes to pass that pure and eternal justice has thus taken wing and fled from every Roman Catholic country in Europe, as from some ungenial clime, and has made her home in Protestant England as in her native place.

And, although laws and governments may explain in some degree the causes of so marked a difference in criminality, yet it is impossible to conceal or stifle the conviction that there may be some element of difference between Protestantism and Romanism, which contains the secret. The practice of priestly absolution, as rife among the members of the Church of Rome—the practice of commuting penance or repentance for money, so general among them—the belief of an amount of merit in attending masses in privileged places,

as a set-off against the demerit of sins—and above all, the belief that masses can relieve the souls suffering for their sins in Purgatory, combined with the practice of buying and selling those masses, all tend to diminish the religious fear and awe associated with crime against God. The prevalence of such belief and such practices in any land tends necessarily to the multiplication of crime; and while this accounts for the higher criminality of the Roman Catholic countries of Europe, their total exclusion from Protestant England, is one great element toward the diminution of such crimes within her borders.

But eternal and sacred truth demands a further statement. There is an element of difference between the two religions of immense importance. It is this—

Both Romanism and Protestantism are agreed as to the deep, black, awful sinfulness of the murderer. They are in accord as far as the murderer himself is concerned, as to his conscience, as to his soul, as to his eternal destinies if he die unrepentant. They may differ indeed as to the mode of getting rid of his guilt, but they are in accord so far as the murderer himself is concerned, while they are as wide as the poles respecting the murdered victim.

This difference is wide and important in its results. That which gives a double-dyed guilt and shivering horror to the crime of murder in the eyes of a Protestant is, that it is suddenly sending an immortal being unbidden before his final Judge;—unprepared, and perhaps unthinking, before the last judgment, then and there, “with all his imperfections on his head,” to receive his eternal destinies. There is no change in the grave; as he lived and died, so he rises and is judged. It is this that gives such unspeakable awe to this crime, and makes a good man shudder at its very name. But in the Church of Rome all this feeling, so cogent in restraining this crime, is annihilated. In her it is held, that the moral condition of a man may undergo a change in the grave—that he may be purified and bettered in his after state by purgatorial sufferings; and that after a time he may even stand spotless

and blameless before his Judge. In connection with this doctrine it is held that the friends of the dead can relieve his sufferings, and secure his release, by getting masses said for his soul. And these masses are to be bought and sold as any other merchandise in the market. The result is, that the murderer looks on his bleeding victim, as he lies stark and ghastly, and he comforts himself with the thought that the surviving friends of the victim have it in their power to save him, by having masses offered for his soul; and that if they indeed fail—if they withhold the money from the priest, he himself has but to pay a trifling sum for the required number of masses; and he thus relieves himself—he disburdens his conscience of all that which gives the highest awe—the darkest and dreariest color to this crime in the eyes of a Protestant Christian.

I have myself personally witnessed this traffic. There are certain altars, called "privileged altars," in the churches of Rome; the special privilege of which is, that a single mass said at such altar is adequate to release from purgatorian suffering the soul for which it is offered. I witnessed personally the sale of this privileged mass to a large number of persons in the Church or Basilica of Santa Croce di Gerusalemme in Rome. Each person stated the name of the friend supposed to be suffering in purgatory—paid four paula, about one shilling and eight-pence, and received an acknowledgment in writing! I witnessed again the same process at the feast of the Assumption at Varallo in 1851. I had visited the Sacro Monte there to witness the pilgrimages to the shrine of the Virgin. The high altar of the principal church possesses the privilege already alluded to. And near it was a *bureau* or office; with a notice publicly setting forth to the multitude of pilgrims, that it was there they received the payments for the privileged masses, for the relief of the souls in Purgatory. The pilgrims were entering, paying their money, giving the names of their departed friends, receiving an acknowledgment, and then withdrawing. I entered myself; I stated my wish to release the soul of a departed friend. The official

bowed courteously, and opened a large account-book, asked me my name.

I gave him my name.

He entered it in this account-book, but spelled it, as most Italians do with an English name, so that I could not myself recognize it. We both smiled, and he apologized on account of the difficulty of writing a foreign name.

I asked him how much I was to pay for the release of my friend.

He replied—two francs Milanese and seven cents.

I gave him a five-franc piece and received the change, by which it appeared he retained about one shilling and eight-pence.

He then asked the name of my friend in Purgatory, whose soul was to be released.

I felt that this was the moment for demonstrating the absurdity and knavery of this system. I thought that the best way of doing this was to give the name of some one who was certainly not then in Purgatory. I gave my own name!

He immediately handed me a book—the book of the names of all souls to be released by the privileged mass, and which book is deposited on the altar, so that when the priest says the privileged mass, he may name audibly or mentally the names of those to be released. In this book there were entered on the same page above twenty names already. On handing this book to me he smiled courteously, and apologized for giving me the trouble of writing the name, requested that I would myself write it, lest he should make any mistake. I wrote my own name at full length!

He again bowed most courteously, apparently intimating that all was completed for the present. But, remembering that I saw others get receipts, I asked for one.

On filling the blanks in the receipt-form, he asked whether I would not like a *Blessing* for my friend's soul, as well as the *Mass*.

I replied, with many thanks, that as the privileged mass

was sure to release his soul from Purgatory, he would not want the Blessing.

He smiled, completed the receipt—signed it—and I withdrew.

Such was the scene in which I personally took part. The following is a copy of the receipt :

“1851. Sept. 8th. THE SACRED MOUNT.

“I, the undersigned, agent of the venerable fabric of the Sacred Mount of Varallo, have received from Mr. Hobart Seymour, the charity of one shilling and eight-pence for one Mass to be celebrated at the perpetually privileged daily altar of the most blessed Virgin Mary in Varallo.

“[In witness.]

AGNO BERTOLI.”*

When a system like this is openly and publicly taught, and believed, and practiced, by the priesthood on one hand and by the people on the other ;—a system by which either murderer or victim may be released from the sufferings of another world by a small sum in this—where a system like this prevails among the population of any country, it ceases to be a matter of surprise that crime should abound in all its most dark and terrible features. The wonder would be if it should be otherwise.

But there is another field for inquiry, beside the Criminal Calendars. The argument against which I am contending, refers to the domain of vice and immorality, rather than to

* The original is as follows:—

1851, addi 8 Smbre, dal S. Monte.

Ho ricevuto io sottoscritto assistente della veneranda Fabbrica del sacro Monte di Varallo dal Signor Hobart Seymour, l'elemosina di lire, 2:7. di Mil. per Messe unada celebrarsi all'altare privilegiato quotidiano perpetuo della Beattissima Vergine Maria.

In fede.

AGNO BERTOLI.

This form of receipt is *printed*, and is surmounted by a drawing of the high altar. The term “elemosina,” is that usually applied to moneys granted for masses, for the relief of souls in purgatory.

the province of criminal police ; and as that argument is, that we have sunk to such a depth of depravity in Protestant England, that it becomes desirable to introduce the peculiar checks, which the convents, and nunneries, and sisterhoods, and confessionals, and, generally, the institutions of the Church of Rome, impose upon vice and immorality ; so we must now proceed to examine, whether these have indeed succeeded so well in Roman Catholic countries, as to induce us to consent to try the perilous experiment of their influence in England.

In turning to this part of our subject, I would bear in mind that there are many circumstances which tend to real and actual immorality, besides the defects of religious principle. There are sins that may be said, in a measure, to belong to latitude and longitude, to the domain of geography, rather than to the province of churches. The vice of excess in spirituous drink is greatest as you ascend, and least as you descend, in the scale of latitude. The nearer we approach the poles the more it prevails, and the nearer we touch the equator the more it disappears. The vice of polygamy with all its attendant evils, seem mainly governed by longitude, for the further we travel to welcome the sunrise in the east the more it prevails, and the more we seek the sunset of the far west, the more surely it vanishes away. It must not be said, or thought for a moment, that religion has not its full influences in restraining both of these odious tendencies, but a wise man will see and feel, that in estimating the comparative morality of a people, it is necessary to take into account the influence of climate, the geographical position, and the civil institutions of nations. The essential morality or immorality of any act, must of course be determined exclusively by the word of revelation. But in estimating the comparative morality of widely-separated and far different peoples, there are other elements that deserve consideration in their measure. Religion is the main element, but climate, and government, and civil institutions, are items of no slight importance.

There are institutions, or rather customs in Northern and

Western Germany, where Protestantism prevails, respecting marriage, by no means favorable to purity of morals. And there are other and different laws, local in their nature, that greatly tend, in Eastern and Southern Germany, which is chiefly Roman Catholic, to the injury of marriage, and the promotion of immorality. The Poor Law of England has in like manner too often operated unfavorably for the morality of the population. And, therefore, in forming an estimate of the comparative morality or immorality of different nations, we are bound to retain in memory that there are other elements, besides their respective religions, to be taken into consideration.

It is with a full sense of the weight due to all such considerations, that I propose now to compare the morality of Protestant England with that of Roman Catholic countries; that so we may learn whether the convents, and nunneries, and confessionals, and sisterhoods of Rome, have proved such effectual restraints upon vice and immorality, as may make us desire to introduce them into England.

It must not for a moment be supposed, that I charge the Church of Rome with avowedly countenancing vice or immorality. She does neither the one nor the other. And I know of few things I would deprecate more distinctly, than being thought to give currency to such an accusation. The charge which I do bring against her, is totally different from this. It is, that whereas all religions, whether true or false, Jewish, Christian, Mohammedan, Pagan, and all churches, whether Roman, Greek or Protestant, impose certain restraints more or less strong on vice or immorality, and offer some principles more or less efficacious to protect against temptation; those restraints and those principles which the Church of Rome offers are weaker than those of other churches. I do not charge her with countenancing vice, but I do charge her with placing weaker restraints upon temptation. I do not accuse her with encouraging immorality, but I do accuse her of advancing weaker principles, as a protection in the time of temptation.

The result of this state of things is precisely what might be expected. Where there are no special temptations, there a Roman Catholic peasantry will be found as moral and virtuous, generally speaking, as a Protestant peasantry. But wherever temptations exist, as in large towns, crowded cities, localities that surround a royal court, places where wealth panders to the passions of the rich, and corrupts the morals of the poor; in those regions where wealth and power go hand in hand with corruption and vice, there where the most seductive temptations exist—there where the principles and restraints of the different religions are most tested; it is universally found that the religion of Rome is weaker than our Protestant Christianity. It is not that either the one religion or the other sanctions or encourages sin, but it is, that while there are no temptations, the two systems exhibit no opposite results; but where there are temptations, there the restraints and principles of Romanism are incomparably weaker and less efficacious than those of Protestant Christianity.

In carrying out, therefore, our present inquiry, it would be a waste of time to examine, even if it were practicable, either the bogs of Roman Catholic Ireland, or the highlands of Protestant Scotland—the valleys of the Roman Catholic Apennines, or the heights of the Protestant Alps. These are regions too remote from those most seductive temptations which test the power of religious principles, and in such regions the population of all countries are very much on an equality. I shall, therefore, confine myself to the scenes of wealth, and power, and commerce, and manufacture and population—to the dense and crowded towns and cities, where temptation unavails all her allurements and seductions, and where religious principle is most sorely and severely tried.

I shall commence, therefore, with that best evidence we possess, namely, the number of illegitimate births, as compared with the legitimate, in the great capitals of Europe. Almost every country has statistical tables of the yearly amount of births, distinguishing the legitimate from the illegitimate, and the numbers I shall here adduce, shall be those

of the respective governmental returns. The shade of a suspicion can not attach to these.

And first, for Protestant LONDON—the city of the whole world in which there is the wealthiest aristocracy, and the largest amount of gentry—where there is more commerce, more wealth, a larger population, and greater temptations in number, and amount, and variety, than in any other capital in the universe, and where, therefore, one might fairly expect the largest proportionate amount of immorality.

The Registrar-General is required to lay before Parliament and the sovereign a statement in detail every year of the number of births throughout England and Wales; specifying what proportion of such births may have been illegitimate.

The return for 1851, states that the total number of births in the London division, with a population of 2,362,236, was 78,300, and of these :

The legitimate were . . .	75,097
And the illegitimate . . .	3,203

This shows the illegitimate births to be about **four** per cent., that is, that in every hundred births there are, omitting fractions, *ninety-six* legitimate children and *four* illegitimate. In other words, every *twenty-fifth* child is illegitimate.

The return of the Registrar-General for the preceding year gives a similar state of things. The total number of births, omitting the still-born, was 72,612, and of these :

The legitimate were . . .	69,784
And the illegitimate . . .	2,828

This shows the illegitimate births, omitting fractions, to be **four** per cent.; and this seems the true number for London.

And next for Roman Catholic PARIS. M. Guerry, in his able work, "*Statistique Morale de la France*," states : "The illegitimate births in the city of Paris are to the legitimate as one to 1.77." We reckon therefore in Paris, one illegitimate birth to a little less than two legitimate ones. This propor-

tion which, it is true, some departments of the interior increase, leads to the conclusion, that in the capital *more than one third part of the native population consists of bastards.*" This, which was published twenty years ago, presents a picture of immorality and vice for which one is scarcely prepared. It fixes the illegitimate births at more than thirty-five per cent. And now for the present day.

The Prefects of the several Prefectures in France are obliged to register all the births of their respective Prefectures, distinguishing between the legitimate and the illegitimate. These returns, as respects Paris, are published by the *Bureau des Longitudes*.

The returns for 1850, give the total number of births at Paris for that year as 29,628, of these :

The legitimate were . . .	19,921
And the illegitimate . . .	9,707

This shows the illegitimate to be about **THIRTY-THREE** per cent. In other words, almost every *third* child is illegitimate !

The returns for 1851 are very similar. They give the total number of births at 32,324, of these :

The legitimate were . . .	21,689
And the illegitimate . . .	10,636

This gives a result very much the same as that of the preceding year. Almost every *third* child born in Paris is illegitimate—a proportion but little better than that which prevailed thirty years ago ; so that **THIRTY-THREE** per cent. may be set down as the number for Paris.

The city of BRUSSELS, essentially Roman Catholic as it is, the capital of the most truly and sincerely religious of all the Roman Catholic nations of Europe, comes next in order. The returns are made to the government, and are published by the Secretary of State.* The returns for the year 1850, which

* "Population, Mouvement de l'Etat Civil, pendant l'Année 1850, Publié par le Ministre de l'Intérieur. Bruxelles, 1851." Google

are the last published, give the total number of births in Brussels at 5281, and of these :

The legitimate were	3,448
And the illegitimate	1,833

This is significant of an amount of vice still greater than that of Paris. It is about THIRTY-FIVE per cent. More than one third of the population is illegitimate !

And yet even this, sad and melancholy as it is, is better than the condition of Roman Catholic MUNICH—the capital of Bavaria. It is the unhappy lot of that city, that, although its management is under the influence of the priesthood of Rome, that influence has been directed to strengthen the priestly power in the State, rather than to improve those civil institutions, that throw difficulties in the way of marriage. By the returns last published, and which contain those for the year 1851,* the total number of births in Munich was 3464 ; and of these :

The legitimate were	1,762
And the illegitimate	1,702

There is here a picture of vice and immorality for which one is scarcely prepared in a city professing itself Christian, and exclusively under the influence of those institutions of the Church of Rome, whose influence is supposed to be so salutary. The illegitimate births are about FORTY-EIGHT per cent. Nearly one half of the population is illegitimate !

And next, we turn to Roman Catholic VIENNA. The returns from this city give a painful and distressing picture of the gradual deterioration of the moral principle. The amount of vice and immorality is steadily increasing. In London and even in Paris, they exhibit an improvement—however slight, there is an improvement upon the past, but unhappily it

* "Beiträge zur Statistik des Königreichs Bayern, Von Hermann, München, 1854."

is the reverse at Vienna. The total number of births in that city in 1841 was 16,682. Of these :

The legitimate were . . .	8,941
And the illegitimate . . .	7,741

Nearly one half! And as this was worse than at former periods, so year by year the frightful depravity deepens and blackens, and seems to threaten the overthrow, as by a deluge of vice, of every appearance and pretense of morality. In 1849, the number of births was 19,241 ; and of these :

The legitimate were . . .	8,881
And the illegitimate . . .	10,360

The number of illegitimate births exceeded the legitimate ! This is so revolting and monstrous that it may well be deemed fabulous and beyond all credibility in a professedly Christian city. And yet there is no clearer evidence of any fact under the sun than of this fact. There is connected with the Imperial Government of Austria a department, called "Die Direction der Administrativen Statistik," in other words, an Imperial Commission for collecting and publishing the statistics of the empire. The tables of this Direction have been published with the remarks of the "Ministerial Secretär" in two volumes, at Vienna, in 1852. I purchased them in that city in 1853. These tables extend from the year 1830 to the year 1851. And the Government Secretary carefully calculates and gives the yearly averages of the first nine years ; he then gives the averages of the second nine years' period ; and afterward the average of the remaining three years. His returns, comparing the illegitimate with the whole number of births in Vienna, are as follows, omitting the fractions :

The yearly average from 1830 to 1838,	FORTY-FOUR per cent.
" " " " 1839 to 1847,	FORTY-EIGHT "
" " " " 1848 to 1851,	FIFTY-ONE "

Such are the returns in the Imperial offices at Vienna.

They exhibit a state of society in the Austrian capital that seems without parallel in the whole world, except perhaps, in some of her own provinces. More than one half of the population are illegitimate !

My present object, however, is simply to state on the authority of the governmental returns, the facts as they exist—to set forth the moral state of London, Paris, Brussels, Munich and Vienna, in order to learn whether the restraints which the Church of Rome imposes upon immorality—whether the convents and nunneries and confessionals and other institutions of that church have so succeeded in those capitals in lessening or suppressing vice and immorality, as to lead to the conviction that they are more effective than the restraints of our Protestant and English Christianity.

The following concise summary will enable us to form a judgment upon this subject. It refers exclusively to capital cities.

The proportion of illegitimate births is :

In Roman Catholic Paris	THIRTY-THREE per cent.
“ “ Brussels	THIRTY-FIVE “
“ “ Munich	FORTY-EIGHT “
“ “ Vienna	FIFTY-ONE “
In Protestant London	FOUR “

These figures are astounding. It almost requires an effort to believe them. They seem almost invented for the occasion : and yet they are all official and governmental returns, as certain and authoritative as such records can possibly be.

Nor is it to be supposed that this proportion is confined to the capital cities of Europe. If the returns from the departments or counties, in which those capitals are situated, be examined—as Middlesex, and the Department of the Seine, and Lower Austria, etc., it will be found that results somewhat similar are exhibited. The same remark applies to the manufacturing cities, and to the naval ports of the several nations. If Birmingham be compared with Lyons, or Sheffield with Liege, or Plymouth with Trieste, the results have the same grand characteristic in favor of the moral state of Protestant

England. And all tending to show that however the members of the two religions may seem on an equality in the rural districts, where they are remote from temptation; yet in all those localities which are the scenes of commerce and manufacture and wealth—in all those localities which are the haunts of temptation, and possess the elements of seduction, the motives and restraints of Protestant Christianity are incomparably more effective than those of the Church of Rome.

It would be interesting as well as instructive, to compare the state of a given number of cities in Protestant England with a similar number in Roman Catholic countries. I am not in possession of the official reports of the Prefects of the various cities of France: and I am unwilling to advance any thing unless on official and governmental records of authority. And therefore I am not in a position to make this comparison as between the cities of England and the cities of France. I much regret this; but I am in possession of the governmental returns of the cities of Germany, and of those of Italy, and shall exhibit the comparison.

I take the figures for England from "The Report of the Registrar General for the year 1847," as it contains all the details as to the illegitimate births, more fully than the ordinary abstract. And I take the figures for Austria from the governmental returns in "Die Statistik des Oesterreichischen Kaiserstaates," as published by the Ministerial Secretary in 1852. I omit fractions:

PROTESTANT England.			ROMAN CATHOLIC Austria.		
Bristol and Clifton	about	4 per cent.	Troppan	about	26 per cent.
Bradford	"	8	Zara	"	30
Birmingham	"	6	Innsbruck	"	22
Brighton	"	7	Leibach	"	38
Cheltenham	"	7	Brunn	"	42
Exeter	"	8	Lintz	"	46
Liverpool	"	6	Prague	"	47
Manchester & Salford	"	7	Lemberg	"	47
Plymouth	"	5	Klagenfort	"	56
Portsea	"	5	Gratz	"	65

The foregoing series represent fairly the various classes of cities in England, and those of Austria represent the most populous in that empire. The contrast between them as to the amount of illegitimate births is sufficiently striking. The average in England is little more than six per cent: that is, in one hundred births, there are nearly *ninety-four legitimate* children, and only a little more than *six illegitimate*, while the average in the cities of Austria is about **FORTY-TWO** per cent., that is, in each hundred births, there are *fifty-eight legitimate* and *forty-two illegitimate* children! On the average of the last three years, Vienna, Gratz and Klagenfort have obtained the extraordinary distinction, that the illegitimate births absolutely exceed the number of the legitimate! The illegitimate are:

In Vienna	51 per cent.
In Klagenfort	56 "
In Gratz	65 "

This is, probably, without parallel in the world. And yet in all those cities the Church of Rome has her most ample development.

The cities of Italy do not present on the surface so striking a contrast, but one of great importance to our present inquiry. I take the figures from Mittermaier's collection of Italian statistics, having been collected by him from the governmental tables; and also from the work on the statistics of the Austrian empire, so often cited already, and which, of course, has also the statistics of Lombardy.

It is impossible, from the very nature of Italian life, to obtain any thing like an accurate estimate of the illegitimate births. This arises from the fact observed by all travelers acquainted with that country, that the greatest amount of immorality prevails among the married women—that it is, at least, very difficult among the unmarried; and the reason is this: there is a feeling very general among the Italians that young girls, arriving at a marriageable age, are unable to preserve their own purity, and will, probably, fall unless watched

and guarded with the greatest vigilance. It is the vice of Italian life to have low and dishonoring opinions of women, as if she was frail—intensely frail—so frail, that the opportunity for sinning is too often regarded as evidence enough of having sinned ; guilt is supposed, and honor lost, in every case where risk of either was regarded as possible ; so that it is thought that marriage, or a convent, or the strictest watchfulness, is the only real protection for a maiden. Her own moral and religious principle seems never thought of ! This watchfulness continues till marriage, and the society of young men is excluded till some one is selected for marriage ; and thus a dragon-like vigilance over the unmarried, prevents the possibility of illegitimate births ; while the state of married life is too often such a tissue of intrigue, that, however illegitimate the births are known to be, they must, from the simple fact of the mother's marriage, be registered as legitimate.*

And yet it is this very phase of Italian life, that places in its strongest relief the real extent of immorality. In the rural districts, in the village homes, in the lonely valleys, and remote districts, the simple peasantry are as pure and virtuous as any in Europe. They are removed far away from the haunts of temptation. But in the cities and towns of Italy, where temptation exists, and where vigilance is necessarily relaxed, we find the results the same as in other Roman Catholic countries. I shall here set down the five capital cities of Italy, and contrast them with five cities of England in reference to the number of illegitimate births. I omit fractions :

PROTESTANT England.		ROMAN CATHOLIC Italy.	
Liverpool	6 per cent.	Turin	20 per cent.
Bristol and Clifton	4 " "	Milan	35 " "
Plymouth	5 " "	Venice	17 " "
Brighton	7 " "	Florence	20 " "
Manchester	7 " "	Naples	16 " "
29		108	

* It is stated that a prodigious number of illegitimate births are prevented by the priests, who learn the state of the young women in the

This is a high figure, considering the peculiarities of Italian life, by reason of which, notwithstanding the enormous immorality that prevails, there must always be comparatively a small amount of births legally illegitimate. The English cities present an average of six per cent. and the Italians an average of TWENTY-ONE per cent. These figures show that the convents and nunneries and confessionals and sisterhoods, and all the other appliances of Rome for the restraint of vice, have so far proved unsuccessful, as that they offer to us no inducement to encourage them in England.

But I have said nothing of Rome—the city of the church! I have not numbered it among others, because I have been unable to procure any governmental or authoritative account of its illegitimate births, and I am unwilling on so grave a question, to state any thing unless on the most certain authority. Perhaps it could scarcely be expected, that an ecclesiastical city with a Pope, many cardinals, twenty-nine bishops, 1,280 Priests, 2,092 monks, 1,698 nuns, and 537 ecclesiastical pupils in the year 1852, as appears in the census of that year, should publish a record of illegitimate births. At least I have failed to procure it, but at the same time we might expect that they might supply us with some record of their virtues, their piety, and their charities. To this they certainly have responded. They point to the Foundling Establishments, and with a natural pride repeat the number of helpless little foundling children, saved, fed, clothed, and educated by the monks and nuns of Rome. In the exhibition of such charity they forget that it is also an exhibition of the vices of their city.

In the Italian statistics collected by Mittermaier, we have the number of foundling children received into *il S. Spirito il*

confessional, and then use their influence to effect a marriage before the birth. It is said that the females of Italy are more open and candid in confession than any other women in the world; and certainly it would be well, if the priests never made a worse use of their information than to effect a marriage. Alas! the morals of Italian society tell a different tale.

Conservatorio, and other establishments for foundlings. He gives the numbers received during a series of ten years. The total was 31,689. And this vast multitude is maintained by the endowments of these establishments, and with the attendance of monks and nuns. This total, distributed through the ten years, gives a yearly average of 3,160 foundlings exposed in the city of Rome!

But, in order to form a just estimate of the wonderful enormity of this, it is necessary to bear in mind that the average population of Rome—apart from the monks and nuns, the bishops and priests, and other ecclesiastics who are to be assumed to be a non-productive population, and who in many thousands are ever coming and going from and to every part of Italy—is about 130,000 souls. The actual population is sometimes considerably more, and sometimes far less. In 1800, it was 153,004; and in 1813, it was only 117,882. And in 1836 it rose again to 153,678. In this last year, the births were 2,258 boys, and 2,115 girls; being a total of 4,373 births, as appears by Bowring's Report, as laid on the table in the House of Commons.

The result therefore is, that while the total number of births is 4,373, the total number of foundlings is 3,160! This may argue unexampled benevolence on the part of monks and nuns, in providing for so many; but it also argues either a monstrous amount of illegitimate births, or at least an unparalleled number of cruel and unnatural mothers that could thus expose their new-born offspring.

They have a profane jest at Rome against the English, and other strangers, who can not admire too much the loving and motherly care exhibited by the nuns toward these little outcasts. They say, that the English and such strangers are like Pharaoh's daughter, who, in her simplicity, often admired the loving and motherly care exhibited by his nurse to the infant Moses!

But what, it may be asked, becomes of all these little ones—especially the foundling girls, in after life? We read that in one year there were forty children, out of the 3,160 reclaimed

by their parents. It is stated in Bowring's Report, on the authority of Morichini, that seventy-three per cent. of these foundlings die in these establishments! This certainly disposes of a large amount of these helpless little ones; but still it may be asked, what becomes of the multitude that remains in after-life? This inquiry can only be answered by authority. I could not myself attempt it; I shall therefore give it from the evidence of the Rev. Francis S. Mahoney, a Roman Catholic priest who resided twenty years at Rome, and whose evidence was given before the select committee of the British House of Commons, on the Mortmain Acts. His evidence will be found appended to the Report of the Committee, as printed by order of the House in 1851.

He was questioned as to the endowments existing at Rome, for the purpose of giving small marriage-portions to young girls, to enable them to marry. He says, page 407:

"In Rome, that form of charity appeared to be the one recommended to dying sinners, sensualists, and persons who had led a disreputable life; and a great means of repairing the evil they had done during life, in the seduction of young girls, was to endow, on their death-beds, portions for maidens, to enable them to get honestly married. There was no doubt a pious and benevolent notion presiding over this; but on inquiring into the practical working of the system, I found it to be any thing but satisfactory. Most of these marriages, as far as my inquiry went among the poorer classes of the people, who were principally benefited by the endowments, rarely turned out any thing praiseworthy or desirable. The selection of the husband was rarely left either to the maiden, or to the family, or to the parents of the maiden. The patronage of these portions was vested in the most incongruous way, either in convents, or confraternities of laymen, in their corporate capacity, or in the Spanish ambassador [for maidens of Spanish birth.] Instead of being a charity, the prevalence of these portions was a regular nuisance in the social system, and to the community generally. First, because a maiden who could not claim the patronage, through the tortuous ways in which

that favoritism was to be obtained, had no chance at all, and she was laid on the shelf; while an intriguing and forward person, and every way undeserving, obtained through various objectionable tricks, the preference either of those confraternities, or of those convents, or those parties, and they appeared of course in the market as rivals of those who were only virtuous and deserving parties. But there were other evils, still more REVOLTING, which were these: *The parties having the patronage of the portions, making a very nefarious use of the influence it gave them over the minds of the candidates for matrimony; the consequences being notoriously remarked among the lower orders, and any thing but satisfactory to lovers of decency.*"

A strange account this, of the convents and confraternities; that monks of convents and friars of confraternities should make this revolting use of their patronage!

He adds a little further:

"The idea of preventing a girl going into a nunnery is considered shameful. Therefore it is in vain to say that the endowments is to favor marriage, because it would be scouted as never being intended to operate against entrance into a nunnery; and in point of fact most of the Roman nunneries do receive their recruits through the medium of those endowments intended for matrimony; because all those girls who choose nunneries, are entitled to dower in preference to those who merely ask it to marry!"

In such a state of things, where the monks of the convents and the friars of the confraternities make such a revolting use of their patronage, and then place the girls in nunneries, there can be no surprise that while births are 4,373, the foundlings are 3,160 a year.

All this process of argument, however, is open in some measure to the objection that it is scarcely fair to compare England with such remote and differently-circumstanced countries as Austria or Italy; and the truest and fairest mode of testing the efficacy of Romanism on one hand, and of Protestantism on the other, in restraining vice and immorality, would

be by comparing two bordering countries—two countries professing the different religions—and so circumstanced as to be the same in climate and in race. England and Italy are too widely different in every thing to be fitly compared, and therefore the question should be tested on such neighboring countries as Austria and Prussia; as having the same climate and the same race, and even speaking the same language; the former being Romanist and the latter Protestant.

This objection is entitled to considerable weight, and the suggestion that the question should be tested by the moral conditions of Austria and Prussia, is fair and reasonable.

The yearly average of illegitimate births in ROMAN CATHOLIC VIENNA, as already seen, is 51 per cent.

The yearly average of illegitimate births in PROTESTANT BERLIN, is 18 per cent.

This is a difference sufficiently marked to decide the question, at least so far as the respective capitals are concerned.

But it may be brought to a fuller and larger test by comparing, not cities selected here and there from the two countries, but the ten largest and most populous cities of both. The results are as follows, omitting fractions :

In ROMAN CATHOLIC Austria.			In PROTESTANT Prussia.		
Vienna	51	per cent.	Berlin	18	per cent.
Prague	47	"	Breslau	26	"
Linz	46	"	Cologne	10	"
Milan	32	"	Königsburg	28	"
Klagenfort	56	"	Dantzic	20	"
Gratz	65	"	Magdeburg	11	"
Lembach	47	"	Aix-la-Chapelle	4	"
Laibach	38	"	Stettin	13	"
Zara	30	"	Posen	16	"
Brun	42	"	Potsdam	12	"
454			158		

If then the question before us be, as to the efficacy of the restraints of Romanism on one hand, or of those of Protest-

anism on the other, in restraining immorality and vice, and if this question is to be decided by a comparison of Roman Catholic Austria, with Protestant Prussia; two countries inhabited by the same race, and speaking the same language, and situated in adjoining districts, the decision must be governed by the fact, that taking the ten most populous cities of Austria, and the ten most populous cities of Prussia :*

The result in Roman Catholic Austria is FORTY-FIVE per cent.	
And in Protestant Prussia	SIXTEEN “

These results must be left to speak for themselves.

But this process of illustration may be carried further. It is often asserted that the Protestant countries, as Norway, Sweden, Saxony, Hanover, Wurtemberg, are equally demoralized, if not actually worse, than the Roman Catholic countries. I have not one word to offer in defense or extenuation of them. All I have to say is, that if in these there be indeed a depth of immorality, there is in the Roman Catholic countries a depth that is lower still. I boldly say, that if any man name the worst of all the Protestant countries, I care not which, I will name a Roman Catholic country that is still worse.

Let Protestant Norway be named; its population in 1835 was 1,194,610; and the proportion of illegitimate births was, at the last return, from *seven to eight per cent.* Let Roman Catholic Styria, a province with a similar amount of population, 1,006,971, be set against this. The illegitimate births are *twenty-four per cent.!*

Let Sweden be examined, with its Protestant population of 2,983,144, in 1835. Its illegitimate births were about *seven per cent.* And then let Upper and Lower Austria be set beside it, with a Roman Catholic population of nearly the same amount, 2,244,363. Its illegitimate births are *twenty-five per cent.!*

* The figures respecting Prussia, are taken from the returns, published by order of the Government in Berlin only two years ago. "Die Tabellen, etc." are in the library of the British Museum.

If Saxony, with its Protestant population, exhibits so frightful a spectacle as that its illegitimate births are *fourteen per cent.*, then let Carinthia with its Roman Catholic population be set against it; its illegitimate births are about *thirty-five per cent.*!

If in Denmark, with its Protestant population, the illegitimate births are less than *ten per cent.*, there is the Province of Saltzberg, with its Roman Catholic population, where the illegitimate births are above *twenty-two per cent.*

If Hanover be referred to, and among its Protestant population, the illegitimate births are *ten per cent.*, then let the Province around Trieste, with its Roman Catholic population, be remembered; its illegitimate births are above *twenty-three per cent.*!

And, finally, let Wurtemberg and Bavaria be compared. They are two kingdoms lying alongside each other, with this only difference, that in the former the Protestants are two thirds and the Roman Catholics one third of the population; while in the latter the Roman Catholics are three fourths, while the Protestants are only one fourth of the population. The result is, that in the former, where the Protestants are the more numerous, the illegitimate births are about *twelve per cent.* The illegitimate were 8,859, and the legitimate 66,579; while in the latter, where the Roman Catholics form the large majority, the illegitimate births are *twenty-four per cent.*, that is, the illegitimate were 30,729, and the legitimate 118,456.

In short, name any Protestant country or any Protestant city in Europe, and let its depth of vice and immorality be measured and named, and I will name a Roman Catholic country or city whose depths of vice or immorality are lower still.

And yet there is an important element to be considered in all calculations as to the amount of illegitimacy in the Protestant districts of Germany.

The returns as to the number of illegitimate births in Prussia and in the lesser Protestant States, must be received with a consideration. This consideration goes to distinguishing be-

tween the nominal and the actual amount. It is this:—In Germany, as in Scotland, the Protestant population are Presbyterian, and have cast aside as useless much that was formerly associated in their minds, with the evils of episcopal courts. Accordingly, both in Germany and in Scotland, it was held that marriage was purely a civil and not a religious contract. This public feeling became law in Scotland. A marriage-contract, or acknowledgment of marriage in the presence of witnesses, was held as a valid marriage in law, and the offspring legitimate. But in Germany there was a difference. The feeling of many of the people was, and is, that when the parties are formally, and in the presence of witnesses, affianced to each other, by a formal act of betrothal, the marriage is sufficiently valid; and, accordingly, many marriages go no further. They remain as they do in Scotland. But the law goes further, and demands, very rightly, as I think, further formalities, or it will not recognize the marriage as valid. The consequence of this state of things is, that many children are returned in the police returns to Government as illegitimate;—the law declares them to be such—though their parents think them to be legitimate, and they are regarded as such by the popular feeling of the country. This state of things gives the appearance of a larger amount of illegitimate births in the Protestant states than would otherwise be the case. This, however, never has, and indeed never can affect the Roman Catholic population, who regard marriage as a sacrament, to be celebrated only by a priest; but this it is which explains the anomaly, that while the Austrian Roman Catholics are incomparably less moral than the Prussian population, there is the appearance of less immorality among the Prussian Roman Catholics than among the Prussian Protestants. It has arisen from those peculiar views respecting the forms of betrothal and marriage, by which many of the lower orders, in the rural districts especially, regard the betrothal, solemnly made in the presence of the families of both parties, as tantamount to a real marriage.

And now, to bring this paper to a conclusion.

It has been stated at the commencement, that the object of this paper was not to charge the Church of Rome with encouraging crime, and above all, the crime of murder ; nor yet to accuse her of teaching immorality, or inculcating vice ; neither did it enter into the writer's object, to draw any contrast between the moral or immoral character of the Church of Rome on the one hand, and the Church of England on the other. The real object was, to show that whatever were the restraints of the Church of Rome upon crime and immorality, and whatever were the encouragements to struggle against temptation, they are proved by experience to be less effective than those which are presented to us in the Church of England. And yet more, the object was to prove more especially, that convents and nunneries and confessionals and sisterhoods and other Romish institutions have proved so inefficacious for restraining immorality and vice in those Roman Catholic countries where they have been supported by the government, and where they have been a part of the law of the land, that they afford no encouragement to the introduction of them into England.

Whatever other inferences are deducible from the facts and figures already given, I leave to others.

I have only to repeat what I have said before, that in judging of the criminal calendar of a nation, and in forming an opinion of the morals of a people, there are other elements to be taken into consideration, besides the religion or church of a country. The political institutions—the social laws—the municipal establishments—the physical condition—the amount of wealth, commerce and manufacture—the degree and kind of employments—the climate and local position—all these are elements, more or less important, as being fraught with more or less temptation, in arriving at a true and just conclusion. The religion of a people will always be the main element that governs and influences their morals ; but at the same time, there is an influence also exercised by those other elements which ought never to be lost sight of, when we would form a just and equitable opinion.

It is true that it has been the unhappy fate of Roman Catholic countries that they have not such valuable and efficient laws and institutions as are found in Protestant countries. The facts and figures given above are demonstrative of this. At least if we are not to attribute the crime and immorality that prevails in them, so much greater as it is, than in Protestant countries;—if we are not to attribute it to something most defective in their religious system, we must attribute it to their defective laws, constitutions, and institutions. And then the question—and a most awkward question—arises, as to how we can account for the fact, that the laws, constitutions and institutions of Roman Catholic countries are more defective than in Protestant countries? And especially in the Papal States, where the civil institutions and the ecclesiastical laws are all alike in the same hands, and where the pontiff can change or reform them at his pleasure? If the evil is to be attributed to defective civil institution, it is an evil that it is always in his power to remedy. But it is to be feared that the real seat of the evil is in the religious system.

The question however, is one too difficult for me to solve to the satisfaction of all men. I have no difficulty whatever in my own mind. At all events, it seems certain that the greater amount of crime and immorality in Roman Catholic countries must be attributed either to the immediate action of the Church of Rome, or to her remote influence on the laws and institutions of every land where she has been established.

A deep conviction of this must be my apology for the publication of these papers, earnestly desiring, as a lover of my country, and as a lover of morality and an enemy of crime, to protect the people of England against the introduction of the convents and nunneries and confessionals and sisterhoods of Rome. They might soon lead us—I do not say they *certainly* would—into the same abyss of murders and immoralities that pollute other lands under the influence of the Church of Rome.

EVENINGS WITH THE ROMANISTS.

THE READING OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES.

The Custom of Canting a Corpse—The Right of the People to the Holy Scriptures—The Objection arising from their Supposed Difficulty—Answer connected with the Language of the Mass—The real Objection is their being too plainly opposed to Rome—This Illustrated in several Particulars: as, Reading the Scriptures, the Worship of Images, the Marriage of the Clergy, Half-Communion, Latin Prayers, Worship of Saints, Confession to Priests—The Objection as derived from Tradition—The Objection against Private Interpretation—The Duty as well as Right of Reading the Holy Scriptures.

At a distance of some five or six miles from where I resided, in a remote parish in the country, was the mansion of a gentleman of considerable property. His wife and family were much interested in religious things, and he himself felt that the progress or improvement of the population, was impeded by the effects of Romanism in the peculiar forms, which it assumed in that part of the country. This family were very kind and attentive to me, and at their request I visited them once every week. They arranged that there should be a congregation composed of the family, the domestics, the laborers and neighboring cottagers—such as wished to attend—assembled on the appointed evening, and that I should meet them and pray with them, and address them in somewhat the nature of a cottage-lecture.

As I was riding over there one day, I observed at the cross-roads that a funeral had just stopped. Being always unwilling to hurt the harmless, though superstitious prejudices of

the simple peasantry, I at once dismounted, and quietly led my horse by the funeral, stopping to exchange a few words of courtesy with the parties. My horse was nearly white, and as there is a superstitious feeling—connected I believe with the vision of Death on the pale horse—as to some ill-luck or blight accompanying the presence of any one riding or driving a white horse, in a direction different from that taken by a funeral, I adopted this course of alighting and saying a few kindly words. The action was observed, my motive fully appreciated, and most kindly taken.

It was one of those scenes called CANTING THE CORPSE. The custom was a very old one, and has long since died out of the country, but was still lingering in this remote district. I allude to more than twenty-five years ago.

The custom was this—The funeral stopped on its way to the place of burial, at every cross-road, and the coffin was placed in the center of the road. The professed object of this was the holy association of ideas connected with a cross, but the apparent object seemed to be that it was in such places they were sure to meet the largest number of passengers. The coffin being placed on the ground, the priest or any acting for him, took a hat in his hand and stood beside it, and asked of all the friends of the deceased for their “offerings,” for the soul of the dead. These “offerings” are sums of money collected for the priest, as payment to him to engage him to “offer” such masses as shall relieve the soul of the departed in Purgatory. It was usual for the priest himself to collect this money, sometimes on a plate, sometimes in his hat. The coffin was placed on the cross-roads, and as each person gave his “offering,” the priest called out the amount in a loud voice. The effect of this was exceedingly droll, for as one person gave his sixpence the priest pronounced his name and the amount, “Paddy Bryan, sixpence, Paddy Bryan sixpence,” so continuing, like an auctioneer at a sale, till another “offering” was made, and then it was “James Riley, one shilling, James Riley one shilling,” so repeating till another offering was given, and then he cried “Billy O’Connor, one

penny, Billy O'Connor *only* one penny!" He thus continued varying the tone of his voice so as to flatter the pride of all who gave largely, and so as to shame the faces of those who gave niggardly. The appearance of the whole scene reminded one of an auction, which in that country was called a cant, and this gave rise to the designation the custom received; it was called CANTING THE CORPSE. The manner and voice of the priest, whose object it was to collect the largest offerings—the faces of the friends who were obliged to show their regard to the dead by the amount of these "offerings"—the angry looks of some whose moderate donations were put to shame, by the contemptuous tone of the priest as he named them—the laughing faces of a laughter-loving people, at the way in which so many were shamed unwillingly out of their money—all formed a scene of the broadest comedy. It was impossible not to be amused, even though it took place over a coffin, that contained the last relics of the dead. A gentle compassion for the poor people had been a more suitable feeling.

I rode on my way. And the more I reflected on this scene, the more I felt that it was one of gross extortion, practiced on the superstitious simplicity of a superstitious and simple people—a people who, more than any other with which I am acquainted, are nervously and jealously sensitive of the opinions of their neighbors. The priest, by the changing tones of his voice, played upon this feeling, and the people were victimized. I felt this so strongly, that when addressing a large assembly of some hundred of Roman Catholics and Protestants in the evening, I narrated the scene and denounced the custom. I have ever rejoiced in knowing that the poor peasantry took encouragement from my words. They were eagerly circulated and as eagerly welcomed through the whole neighborhood. From that moment this custom was discontinued; in its stead a table was placed outside the door of a house where there was one dead, and all who entered or passed gave an "offering" or otherwise, as they felt disposed. This was infinitely more decent. In that neighborhood there never was witnessed again such a scene as *Canting the Corpses*.

While addressing the congregation on this occasion, I stated that such scenes could never occur in a Bible-reading land, for that they never could be submitted to by a Bible-reading people. There was no such place as Purgatory; it was never mentioned in the Holy Scriptures. There was no such way of rescuing the souls of the dead as money-offerings, there was nothing like it described in the Holy Scriptures. And I stated broadly that it was because the Holy Scriptures did not sanction such things, and because if the people read the Holy Scriptures they would not submit to such things; that the Roman Catholic priests opposed the circulation of the Holy Scriptures; that though they seemed to give a variety of other and different reasons, the real truth was—they were opposed to the Holy Scriptures, because the Holy Scriptures were opposed to them.

It was my custom to remain at the house the night of my cottage lecture, and on this account I learned, in the morning that a number of Roman Catholics were waiting to speak with me. I found eighteen or twenty men collected in a small apartment, where several members of the family with myself met them. They had brought with them a spokesman, a young and clever man, who had a great reputation in the neighborhood as a sort of controversial champion of the Church of Rome. There was some desultory conversation on the canting of the corpse, and on the cottage lecture of the preceding evening, and I soon perceived that our conversation might now be usefully turned to the right of the people to read the Holy Scriptures for themselves—the subject more than all else controverted in the country at that period. The Protestant clergy pressed and exhorted the people to exercise their right to read and judge for themselves. The Roman Catholic priesthood denied the right of the laity to read them, and denounced from their altars all who did so.

I turned from the young spokesman and addressed one of the party whose friends had emigrated to America, and from whom he was daily expecting letters and remittances, with a view to his following them—"You are now expecting letters,"

I said, "letters giving account of the far-off land—the land beyond the ocean—the land to which they have emigrated before you. . These letters will inform you of all the difficulties you have to undergo, the dangers you have to avoid, the duties you have to perform. These letters, too, will tell you of the success and of the prosperity that may be hoped for in that distant land ; and will, perhaps, communicate the means by which you will be enabled to reach that land in safety, and be again united with your friends who have gone before you. Now, let us suppose that these letters have arrived—that you have asked for them at the post-office—that the post-master refuses to give them to you—that in consequence you assert your right to letters which are written to you, and intended to be read by you—that he refuses still, saying that it was far better not to give them to you, for that you were an ignorant and unlearned person—that you might mistake the meaning of the letters, and perhaps, might use the money they contained to your own destruction—that therefore he thought it best to keep the letters and their contents to himself, and that you must be content with just as much of them as he thought fit to communicate." I asked the man how, in such a case, he would be disposed to act.

He seemed to me, by the expression of his eye, to see the real drift of my question, and answered that he would make the post-master give him the letters—that they were written to him—that he had a right to them—that they were for his information, and that have them he would.

"But," I said, "when he told you that you were ignorant and unlearned, and might mistake or misunderstand them, how would you answer him ?"

He replied that he would try them at all events—that when he got the letters he would read them, and do his best to understand them, and get others to help him to understand them—but that the letters he would have, and would let no man keep them from him.

"This," I then said, "is precisely the case with the Holy Scriptures they are, as we all know, the Word of God ; they

are written by His Holy Spirit for our instruction and information respecting the land of promise, the heavenly land to which we all are traveling. We are here 'strangers and pilgrims,' emigrants looking forward to another world, not indeed beyond the ocean, but beyond the grave; and the Holy Scriptures are like your expected letters, written to warn us of the temptations and sins which endanger the way—to encourage us by the promises and hopes connected with faith and holiness—and to tell us of all the blessedness and holiness and happiness of heaven. Now my question is—How ought you to act when any man, under any pretense whatever, endeavors to keep these Holy Scriptures from you, which were written for you, and to which you have as much right as you have to the light of the sun or the air of heaven?"

The young spokesman here stopped the other, and answered for him, saying, that the Holy Scriptures were a hard book, and very difficult to be understood—that they puzzled the greatest and most learned divines of all the churches—that they were in consequence misunderstood and perverted to great evil—that simple and unlearned men as they were, being farmers and peasants and laboring men, could not understand them, and might interpret them wrongly—that the Holy Scriptures were intended for the church and not for the people, and therefore, they belonged to the clergy, who were learned and holy men, and not to the laity who were ignorant and unlearned.

And how, I asked him, would you answer the children in school, who said the alphabet was very hard to be understood, and the rules of arithmetic very hard to be comprehended, and the catechism very hard to be remembered, and that they all were so hard that it was better to lay aside both alphabet and arithmetic and catechism? I added, that I would tell them to read and study them more and more, and then to read and study them again and again, and that in due time they would find them no longer hard, but

perfectly easy to be understood. Now, how, I asked, would you answer them ?

He made no reply. Several present said, I had myself given the right answer, namely, to read again ; I therefore told them that if they found the Scriptures hard they had only to read them again and again, and in due time, by God's blessing, they would find them easy enough.

"And may I ask," I spoke very gently, as if changing the subject, "in what language does the priest celebrate the mass in this parish ?"

He replied, "in Latin, of course. In the Church of Rome in every part of the world, the canon of the mass is said in Latin. In this parish there are some parts of the services of the church that are sometimes said in English, and sometimes he preaches in Irish, but he always says the canon of the mass in Latin. Indeed it is myself that assists him at the mass."

He said this with some degree of self-importance, as if communicating to me some information which I seemed to require. It was apparent that he did not see my object in the question.

"I suppose, then, I said, that you know Latin, and that you can understand the Latin of the canon of the mass."

"No," was his reply, "none of us in this parish understand Latin."

"And yet you attend and assist at the saying the mass, you serve at the mass."

"Yes, to be sure," was his answer. "It is I who always serve mass," that is, he acted in the services of the Church of Rome as a clerk does in Protestant churches.

I saw that now I was in the best possible position for dealing with the objection he had urged against the Holy Scriptures being read by the people. He had not perceived the object of my questions as to the Latin language.

I paused for a few moments with the view of drawing the more attention to my answer, and when all seemed waiting for me, I asked quietly, whether I had rightly and clearly un-

derstood the objection he had before urged—that as the mass of the people were ignorant, and could not understand the Holy Scriptures, so they ought not to read them or listen to them—that the fact of their ignorance, and their not understanding them, was adequate reason for their neither reading, nor listening to them.

He assented to this as the argument he had urged, and on which the Church of Rome withheld the Holy Scriptures from the people. They were too unlearned and ignorant to understand them.

I had my answer prepared. It was one I never knew to fail in its effects upon the masses of the people. And I therefore delivered it slowly, that the persons present might clearly understand it. I said—If the fact that the Holy Scriptures are difficult to be understood, that their language is difficult for an ignorant people to understand—if that fact be a good and adequate reason for their neither reading them, nor listening to them, then that other fact—that most certain fact, that the language of the mass celebrated every day in the chapels is Latin—a language not only difficult but impossible to be understood by an ignorant people, must be a good and adequate reason for the people neither attending nor hearing mass.

If a thunderbolt had fallen in the midst of us it could not have created a greater sensation in its way, than this simple answer. The whole party was in commotion, some heard it with an expression of face that seemed searching for some way of escape. Some seemed to regard it as a piece of uncommon and perplexing ingenuity. The larger portion seemed pleased and even delighted with it, as if it were a blow that would baffle all attempts at a reply.

I repeated it slowly, saying—“Your priests tell you that as you can not understand the Holy Scriptures, so you ought not to read them or hear them. If that mode of reasoning be good and valid in reference to the Holy Scriptures, it is equally good and valid in reference to the sacrifice of the mass. As you can not understand the language of the mass, being in

Latin, so you ought not to attend it, or hear it. I added that I argued the other way, namely, that if they might attend mass, although they did not understand its language, so they might as reasonably read and hear the Holy Scriptures, although perhaps they might not understand them as fully as desirable.

There was no mistaking the general effect of this argument on my hearers. They offered no reply, but consulted, apparently with a difference of opinion, to see whether they could not answer me.

After some time, I asked, whether they had no answer to make to this mode of putting the question. One of them suggested to me, that surely the Holy Scriptures were very hard to be understood by poor and ignorant men.

They certainly are very easy, I replied, to be understood by the most poor and most unlearned, in every thing that is necessary for the salvation of the soul—in every thing that concerns you most to know; and as certainly there are also some things too hard for even the learned; and, yet not more hard to you than the language of the mass. The priest tells you that you must attend and hear mass, although you can not understand it. He ought also to tell you that you ought to read and hear the Holy Scriptures, even though you think them hard to be understood.

They gave up the argument as hopeless; even their spokesman seemed puzzled and was silent.

I then said, that the real reason for withholding the Holy Scriptures was widely different. They were told that it was because they were too hard—too difficult to be understood. I believed that the real reason is, that they are so easy—so plain to be understood—that the language of Holy Scripture, when speaking of certain practices in the Church of Rome, reproving and condemning them, is so clear and intelligible, that the people would no longer follow those practices if they read the Holy Scriptures—that this language is so plain and easy that a child may understand it, and that for this very cause the Church of Rome prohibits the reading of the Scriptures

They seemed perplexed at this statement, some among them

had never seen the Scriptures, and therefore knew not whether they were difficult or easy. They only knew that they were told they ought not to have them, simply because being unlearned and ignorant, they could not understand them. They had been told this so often that they believed it, and they were greatly surprised to hear me say that the true reason they were forbidden to read them, was that they were so clear, plain, and easy to be understood. They expressed their surprise in very plain words, and as I saw they were disposed on the whole to place confidence in me, I stated that if they would let me have a few moments uninterrupted, I would explain myself fully.

Their consent was given warmly and readily. Every one seemed intent on hearing.

I said I would do nothing but read a few passages of the Holy Scriptures. They could judge for themselves whether they were hard or easy. They seemed to me very easy to be understood, but they were very hard to be reconciled with the Church of Rome—very hard, indeed, to be explained according to the practices of the Church of Rome.

I then read the following passages to illustrate the right of reading the Scriptures :

“And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart : and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates.”—Deut. vi. 6-9.

Thus they were to be taught even to the children.

“Moses wrote this law, and delivered it unto the priests the sons of Levi, which bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord, and unto all the elders of Israel. And Moses commanded them, saying, At the end of *every* seven years in the solemnity of the year of release, in the feast of tabernacles, when all Israel is come to appear before the Lord thy God in the place

which he shall choose, thou shalt read this law before all Israel is their hearing. Gather the people together, men, and women, and children, and thy stranger that is within thy gates, that they may hear, and that they may learn, and fear the Lord your God, and observe to do all the words of this law ; and *that* their children, which have not known *any thing*, may hear, and learn to fear the Lord your God, as long as ye live in the land whither ye go over Jordan to possess it.”—Deut. xxxi. 9–13.

This again desires them to be taught to the men, women, and children, even the very youngest, who had known nothing else.

“Afterward he read all the words of the law, the blessings and cursings, according to all that is written in the book of the law. There was not a word of all that Moses commanded which Joshua read not before all the congregation of Israel, with the women, and the little ones, and the strangers that were conversant among them.”—Joshua viii. 34, 35.

These words show that all, even the women and the little children, were to hear and learn the Word of God :

“And all the people gathered themselves together as one man into the street that *was* before the water-gate ; and they spake unto Ezra the scribe, to bring the book of the law of Moses, which the Lord had commanded to Israel. And Ezra the priest brought the law before the congregation, both of men and women, and all that could hear with understanding, upon the first day of the seventh month. And he read therein before the street that *was* before the water-gate, from the morning until mid-day, before the men and women, and those that could understand : and the ears of all the people *were attentive* unto the book of the law.”—Nehemiah viii. 1–3.

Here again we have all the people, even the women :

“And the king went up into the house of the Lord, and all the men of Judah, and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem with him, and the priests, and the prophets, and all the people, both small and great : and he read in all their ears all the words of

the book of the covenant *which was* found in the house of the Lord. And the king stood by a pillar, and made a covenant before the Lord, to walk after the Lord, and to keep his commandments and his testimonies and his statutes, with all *their* heart and all *their* soul, to perform the words of this covenant that were written in this book : and all the people stood to the covenant.”—2 Kings xxiii. 2, 3.

It is evident that all the people both small and great were here.

“The brethren immediately sent away Paul and Silas by night unto Berea : who coming thither went into the synagogue of the Jews. These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so. Therefore many of them believed ; also of honorable women which were Greeks, and of men, not a few.”—Acts xvii. 10–12.

The Bereans are here praised for searching the Scriptures, and it is clear that this was done by the women as well as the men.

“Continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them ; and that from a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness : that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.”—2 Tim. iii. 14–17.

Now here it is evident that the Scriptures were intended by God for all, even for little children. And there is no reading these passages without feeling that the people, men, women, and children, alike have a right to learn, read and hear the Holy Scriptures. The priesthood have no more right to deprive them of this, than to deprive them of the light of the sun or the air of heaven ! And I appealed to themselves—whether these Scriptures are not plain and easy, and clear

enough to be understood by them. They are hard and difficult—very hard and difficult indeed, to be explained by the Church of Rome. But, I said, I would give illustration on another point—the use of Images and Pictures.

“Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them nor serve them.”—Exodus xx. 4, 5.

“Take ye therefore good heed unto yourselves; for ye saw no manner of similitude on the day that the Lord spake unto you in Horeb out of the midst of the fire: lest ye corrupt yourselves, and make you a graven image, the similitude of any figure, the likeness of male or female, the likeness of any beast that is on the earth, the likeness of any winged fowl that flieth in the air, the likeness of any thing that creepeth on the ground, the likeness of any fish that is in the waters beneath the earth.”—Deut. iv. 15–18.

“Take heed unto yourselves, lest ye forget the covenant of the Lord your God, which he made with you, and make you a graven image, or the likeness of any thing, which the Lord thy God hath forbidden thee. For the Lord thy God is a consuming fire, even a jealous God. When thou shalt beget children, and children’s children, and ye shall have remained long in the land, and shall corrupt yourselves, and make a graven image, or the likeness of any thing, and shall do evil in the sight of the Lord thy God, to provoke him to anger; I call heaven and earth to witness against you this day, that ye shall soon utterly perish from off the land whereunto ye go over Jordan to possess it; ye shall not prolong your days upon it, but shall utterly be destroyed.”—Deut. iv. 23–26.

“Thus saith the Lord, Learn not the way of the heathen, and be not dismayed at the signs of heaven; for the heathen are dismayed at them. For the customs of the people are vain: for one cutteth a tree out of the forest, the work of the hands of the workmen, with the ax. They deck it with silver and with gold; they fasten it with nails and with hammers

that it move not. They are upright as the palm-tree, but speak not: they must needs be borne, because they can not go. Be not afraid of them; for they can not do evil, neither also is it in them to do good."—Jer. x. 2-5.

These texts seem plain, and easy, and clear. They altogether forbid, as a heathenish custom, the practice of having images and pictures to bow before, or kneel before, or pray before; and this is precisely the view which Protestants take of this practice. The Church of Rome has multitudes of these in their houses and in their churches. And she finds it difficult and hard, and impossible to explain these Scriptures, which are so plainly against the use of images and pictures, so as to reconcile them with her practices, and she is therefore afraid that her people may see that these Scriptures condemn her practice; and so she tells them that they ought not to read them, because that they are too hard to be understood, whereas the real reason evidently is that they are too easily understood for her.

But I will give another instance. It relates to the marriage of the clergy, which is forbidden in the Church of Rome, as sacrilege.

"This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work. A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behavior given to hospitality, apt to teach: Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous; One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?"—1 Tim. iii. 1.

There can be no mistake as to this, for the wife and children of the bishop are mentioned. Again—

"Likewise must the deacons be grave, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre; Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience. And let these also first be proved; then let them use the office of a deacon, being found blameless. Even so must their wives be grave,

not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things. Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well."—1 Tim. iii. 8.

The wives and children of the deacons are here mentioned, again :

"For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee : If any be blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children, not accused of riot or unruly. For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God."—Titus i. 5.

Now here are texts of which no man can possibly say they are hard or difficult in themselves. They certainly are hard and difficult to explain in the Church of Rome, because she forbids the marriage of her clergy, denouncing it as a sacrilege, and declaring it to be wantonness. It is difficult for her therefore to reconcile these Scriptures with her doctrine and practice, but it is apparent to every one, that the texts are plain, and clear enough in themselves, and it is because they are too plain and clear for her, that she gives them the bad name of being hard and difficult. She fears the laity reading them.

But here is another illustration : it is on the subject of refusing the cup of wine to the laity.

"As they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat ; this is my body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it ; For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins."—Matt. xxvi. 26–28.

The cup was given by our Lord, and commanded to be given and taken by all alike, as well as the bread.

Again—"As they did eat, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and brake it, and gave to them, and said, Take, eat ; this is my body. And he took the cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them : and they all drank of it. And he said unto them, This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many."—Mark, xiv. 22–24.

Again—"He took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me. Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you."—Luke xxii. 19, 20.

Again—"The Lord Jesus took bread: And when he had given thanks, he brake it and said, Take, eat; this is my body, which is broken for you; this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me."—1 Cor. xi. 23-25.

Here are Scriptures so plain that "he who runs may read." In every one of them the cup of wine is as prominent as the bread. And when the Roman Catholic priests say that these are difficult, it must be that they are difficult to reconcile with their system; they can not mean that they are difficult in themselves, for every one can see that they are clear and easy to be understood; and that the most simple-minded and unlearned may comprehend them. The suspicion may indeed be entertained, that they are felt to be somewhat too clear and easy to suit the Church of Rome; which, in direct opposition to the Scriptures, refuses all communion in the cup.

I will give you another instance; it shall be of the Latin prayers, of the sacrifices of the mass. They are always read, as already intimated, by the priests in Latin.

"Even things without life giving sound, whether pipe or harp, except they give a distinction in the sounds, how shall it be known what is piped or harped? For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle? So likewise you, except ye utter by the tongue words easy to be understood, how shall it be known what is spoken? for ye shall speak into the air. There are, it may be, so many kinds of voices in the world, and none of them are without signification. Therefore, if I know not the meaning of the voice, I shall be unto him that speaketh a Barbarian; and he that speaketh shall be a Barbarian unto me."—1 Cor. xiv. 7-11.

"If I pray in an unknown tongue, my spirit prayeth; but my understanding is unfruitful. What is it then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also: I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also. Else, when thou shalt bless with the spirit, how shall he that occupieth the room of the unlearned, say Amen at thy giving of thanks? seeing he understandeth not what thou sayest. For thou verily givest thanks well, but the other is not edified. I thank my God, I speak with tongues more than ye all. Yet in the church I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that by my voice I might teach others also, than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue."—1 Cor. xiv. 14–19.

"If therefore the whole church be come together into one place, and all speak with tongues, and there come in those that are unlearned or unbelievers, will they not say that ye are mad? But if all prophesy, and there come in one that believeth not, or one unlearned, he is convinced of all, he is judged of all; And thus are the secrets of his heart made manifest; and so, falling down on his face, he will worship God, and report that God is in you of a truth."—1 Cor. xiv. 23–25.

You yourselves, I said, can say whether these Scriptures are hard and difficult to be understood; they seem to me so plain and easy that a child might understand them. And when the priests tell you that they are too hard to be understood by you, it really looks as if the true reason was that they thought them too plain and easy.

But we can go further. On the subject of prayers to saints and angels, the Holy Scriptures seem equally decisive.

"As Peter was coming in, Cornelius met him, and fell down at his feet, and worshiped him. But Peter took him up, saying, Stand up; I myself also am a man."—Acts x. 25, 26.

"When the people saw what Paul had done, they lift up their voices, saying in the speech of Lycaonia, The gods are come down to us in the likeness of men. And they called Barnabas, Jupiter; and Paul, Mercurius, because he was the

chief speaker. Then the priest of Jupiter, which was before their city, brought oxen and garlands unto the gates, and would have done sacrifice with the people. Which when the apostles, Barnabas and Paul, heard of, they rent their clothes, and ran in among the people, crying out, and saying, Sirs, why do ye these things? We also are men of like passions with you, and preach unto you, that ye should turn from these vanities, unto the living God, which made heaven and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein."—Acts xiv. 11–15.

"And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me, See thou do it not: I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus; worship God: for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophesy."—Rev. xix. 10.

"I John saw these things, and heard them. And when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which showed me these things. Then said he unto me, See thou do it not: for I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God."—Rev. xxii. 8, 9.

"Let no man beguile you of your reward, in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind, and not holding the Head."—Col. ii. 18, 19.

And are these hard and difficult? Are they not easy and plain in themselves, as showing that neither saints nor angels are to be worshiped; and that worship is to be given to God alone? But, considering the practice of the Church of Rome, we can not be surprised that she forbids her members to read such Scriptures, not indeed as is pretended, lest you should find them too hard and difficult, but because she feels they are inconveniently plain and easy for her system.

And now, once more, and I have done; I shall read some passages on the subject of Confession, The Roman Catholics confess to the priests. The Protestants confess to God. Let us see what the Holy Scriptures say:

“And Joshua said unto Achan, My son, give, I pray thee, glory to the Lord God of Israel, and make Confession unto Him; and tell me now what thou hast done; hide it not from me.”—Joshua vii. 19.

The Confession is to God, and not to the priest.

“And Hezekiah spake comfortably unto all the Levites that taught the good knowledge of the Lord: and they did eat throughout the feast seven days, offering peace-offerings, and making Confession to the Lord God of their fathers.”—2 Chron. xxx. 22.

“Ezra the Priest stood up, and said unto them, Ye have transgressed, and have taken strange wives, to increase the trespass of Israel. Now therefore make Confession unto the Lord God of your fathers, and do his pleasure.”—Ezra x. 10, 11.

“I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin. Selah.”—Psalm xxxii. 5.

“I prayed unto the Lord my God, and made my Confession, and said, O Lord, the great and dreadful God, keeping the covenant and mercy to them that love Him, and to them that keep His commandments; we have sinned and have committed iniquity.”—Dan. ix. 4, 5.

And now, I asked, are not all these sufficiently plain and easy in themselves? They describe Confession as being made to God, as it is among Protestants; and not to the priests, as is the practice of Romanists. And surely if the priests assert, that these Scriptures are too hard and difficult to be understood; and that, therefore, you ought not to read them; it may well create the suspicion that they do not wish you to read them, lest you should find them too plain and easy.

And now, I said in conclusion, I felt that I could appeal to themselves; I had read to them many passages of Holy Scripture on several subjects, and I had observed their feelings as they heard them. It was impossible not to see, that they understood every one of them, and that they applied

every one of them to the practices and doctrines of the Church of Rome, and that they felt these Holy Scriptures to be plainly and clearly against her; I therefore could appeal to every one of them, whether these Scriptures are too hard and difficult to understand, or whether it is not that they are so easy and plain that the priests fear the reading of them, and the discovering through them the impositions practiced upon the people.

During the whole time I was reading those several groups of texts, and applying them without comment to certain practices of the Church of Rome—letting each group speak, as it were, for itself—the attention and interest of every one of the Roman Catholic hearers was extreme. Their steady gaze—their listening attitude—their evident surprise—their mutual glance as they applied the several texts—their palpable, and growing, and deepening conviction that the Holy Scriptures were opposed to the Church of Rome, was one of the most striking scenes ever witnessed of its kind. The sudden exclamation of surprise—the speaking glance—the inquiring looks, all told a powerful impression of some kind. I felt that this simple grouping of so many texts on each point, and letting them speak for themselves without comment on my part, gave intense satisfaction. There could be no mistaking the impression. It seemed to them as if it was God in His word, and not I, a Protestant minister, who was appealing to them. And the work was done. It was a realizing the fact, which an apostle mentions, they “received it not as the word of man, but as it is in truth, the Word of God.”

Some desultory conversation followed. It was universally admitted by them, that these Scriptures were plain, clear, and easy enough—that they were, without any doubt, contrary to what they had been taught by their clergy—that they could now see clearly enough the reason they were not allowed to read the Holy Scriptures—that they would for the future, whatsoever might be said to the contrary, read them for themselves. Even the person who accompanied them, in order to vindicate the Church of Rome, seemed thoroughly silenced.

He did not say a word. And it was some time before he could take courage to offer an objection.

When he did speak again, it was in a subdued and humbled tone. He seemed to have lost confidence, either from the feeling visible among his co-religionists, or from the difficulty of his position. "But," at last, he said, "the Protestants made the Scriptures every thing, as if all their religion was there, and not in tradition. The Roman Catholics on the other hand had many things of their religion in tradition—in the tradition of the church." He then went on to explain the theory of the Church of Rome. Our blessed Lord and Saviour was two or three years with His holy apostles—had told and taught them, during that long period, many things that are not written in the gospels, and these things, of which some were doctrines, and some were practices, have never been written in the Holy Scriptures—that indeed the Holy Scriptures were not large enough to contain them all; that these doctrines and practices were taught by the Holy Apostles, by word of mouth, to the holy bishops and clergy that came after Him; that they handed them down by word of mouth to those that succeeded them, and thus some doctrines and practices have been handed down in the church to the present day; and these are the traditions of the church, the oral teaching of the church. Now, he continued, these traditions are to be held, as the Council of Trent says, in equal veneration with the Holy Scriptures. These traditions are in the Church of Rome, which is infallible, as being founded by St. Peter, infallibly preserved by her from loss or corruption or falsification, and all Christians are bound to believe and observe them as much as the Holy Scriptures. When, therefore, he said, in conclusion, you refer to the Scriptures and appeal to them, we will refer to tradition and appeal to it.

I asked him, when he concluded, to tell me any one doctrine or practice of the Church of Rome, which was derived from tradition—which was derived from tradition alone, and was not to be found in the Holy Scripture?

He replied at once—transubstantiation, the holy sacrifice

of the mass, purgatory, prayers for the dead, the worship of the blessed virgin—and there were many others.

"Then you acknowledge," I asked, "that these doctrines are not contained in the written Word of God?" And turning to all present, I called them all to witness the admission, that these things were not in the Holy Scriptures, and were only traditions.

It was immediately exclaimed by several that he had often before been endeavoring to prove them to them, by texts from the Scriptures; and that for their part they would not believe any thing that could not be proved by the Word of God.

He was somewhat disconcerted at this, but said that he could prove them by the Scriptures, but that the Church of Rome held them, not because they were in the Scriptures, but because they were in tradition—that the true rule of faith was, not Scripture alone, nor tradition alone, but both together,—both Tradition and Scripture together. In some books, he said, it was described as the oral or unwritten word, together with the written word, so that the true rule of faith, in the church, was the written and the unwritten word together. And by this means it is that the true doctrines are partly in the one, and partly in the other. And so transubstantiation, and the mass, and purgatory, and the worship of the virgin are partly in the Scriptures, and partly in Tradition—the written and unwritten word.

"I suppose, then," I asked, "that you hold with your Church, that both Tradition and Scripture—both the written and unwritten word, as you call it, are from the same God, and consequently must agree exactly, and can never contradict each other."

"Certainly," he responded, emphatically.

"Then of course," I said, "you hold, that if, in comparing the two, we find any thing contrary, the one to the other, we must reject one of the two?"

"Of course," was his reply.

"If, then," I asked, "any of the doctrines or practices,

which the Church of Rome professes to derive from Tradition, or the unwritten word, should be found contrary to the Scriptures, as the written word, there would then be a contradiction, and which would you reject?"

There was much hesitation here in his manner. Our hearers observed it, and had evidently made up their minds as to the answer they would make, several of them exclaiming aloud, that they would hold to the Scriptures. I repeated the question, asking which, in case of a contradiction, he was to receive, and which reject?

His answer was, that there was no contradiction between the Church of Rome and the Scriptures—that all the doctrines and practices could be proved in the Scriptures—and he then boldly and confidently challenged me to name one that was contrary to the Scriptures, and that he was prepared to meet me.

I named—the use of the Latin language, an unknown language, in the service of the mass; adding that it was clearly contrary to the commands of the Apostle in the very Scriptures already read. I then read again the passages I had before cited from 1 Cor. xiv.

He was perfectly silent. The persons present looked significantly at each other.

I then named—the depriving of the laity of the cup of wine at the administration of the Lord's Supper. And I read, as before, the several accounts of the institution in the gospels.

He was still perfectly silent. The effect of this silence was very great, but very natural upon all present.

The conversation then became general; it was taken up by the persons present, speaking one to the other, on various points of the subject. I did not interfere, as I perceived every thing was tending in the right direction—all tending to shake the confidence of the Roman Catholics present in their church, and to transfer it to the Holy Scriptures.

After some time, I addressed them generally, and said that the Church of Rome held practically two rules of faith. One was Tradition, or the unwritten word, the other was the Holy

Scripture, or the written word. It was perfectly clear to the common sense of every one, that these two, supposed as they are, to come from the same God, can not possibly contradict each other, but must necessarily agree, in every way. It is always, therefore, in our power to try every tradition, professing to be divine, by comparing it with Holy Scripture; and if it be found contrary to the Holy Scriptures, it is contrary to the written word of God; contrary to an admitted portion of the rule of faith, and therefore could not have come from God. It is not a true tradition, it is not a divine tradition. It must necessarily be only a pretended tradition. It is believed in the Roman Church, as much as in the Protestant Church, that the Holy Scriptures are the written word of God. If, therefore, we find any thing taught under the name of a tradition, we have only to compare it with the Holy Scripture, the undoubted Word of God, and accept it, if it agrees with the Scriptures, and reject it if it disagrees. This is our best and simplest course, instead of holding disputations about the importance, or the truth of traditionary things, or perplexing ourselves with subtleties about rules of faith.

He then said that that was private judgment—interpreting the Scriptures according to our private judgment, and not according to the interpretation of the Church; now the blessed St. Peter, the founder of the Church of Rome, and the Rock on which the Lord built His church, has said that we are not to put our private interpretations on the Scriptures, for that they are too hard for us to understand.

I asked him to read the place where the Apostle said that there was to be no private interpretation of the Scriptures.

He opened the well-known passage in 2 Peter, i. 19, and read, "We have also a more sure word of prophecy."

I interrupted him, with the request to mark the word "prophecy," saying, the Apostle's words were, "We have also a more sure word of PROPHECY." That particular word was important.

He then read on, "We have also a more sure word of

prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts; knowing this first, that no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." There he added, it is said that no Scripture is to be privately interpreted.

No, I replied, he does not say that no *Scripture*, but that no *PROPHECY* in the Scripture is of any private interpretation, meaning thereby that the prophets were inspired by the Holy Ghost to deliver certain prophecies—that these prophecies were not of their own impulse, or their own interpretation—that they should be interpreted as the Holy Ghost, who inspired them, designed. This all refers to the prophecies, and the application or interpretation of the prophecies; and has no reference to the Scriptures in general—has no reference to the commandments of God, or the invitations of the Gospel, or the loving words of Jesus Christ. Every man must read the Holy Scriptures for himself—must remember that they are the words of God—that God who will judge him in the great day; and who will, therefore, judge him for any willful, selfish, perverse understanding of his word—must read them in faith and prayer, humbly, reverently, prayerfully looking for the teaching of the Holy Ghost who inspired them. Every man is bound to do it, like the Bereans: "These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so."—Acts xvii. 11. It was the Apostle Paul who had preached to them—an inspired Apostle, one who spake as he was moved by the Holy Ghost, and yet even his words were not taken for granted without examination. The Bereans heard him, listened to him, remembered him, and then searched the Scriptures to ascertain whether his preaching agreed with the Scriptures. Now this is all we ask for any man, and this is what we understand by the right to search the Scriptures, and the right of private judgment. It

is that reverently, and humbly, and prayerfully, we may now do what the Bereans did before us, and were divinely praised for doing—that, if they might compare the words of an Apostle with the Holy Scriptures, so every man, Protestant and Roman Catholic, may now compare the preaching of their clergy with the Holy Scriptures, and receive or reject them according as they find them agreeing or disagreeing with the same.

But, he rejoined, men, who are unlearned and ignorant, are not fit to interpret the Holy Scriptures. They are too hard to be understood, and if they are allowed to interpret them according to their own judgment, they will draw from them every sort of opinion; there will be as many opinions as there are persons.

I reminded him that this objection had been discussed before—that the language of an English Bible was not so hard as the Latin of the Mass—that when his children did not learn their appointed tasks, and excused themselves by saying their tasks were too hard for them, he would, probably tell them to read them over again and again, and yet again, and that after reading often they would find them no longer hard but easy. Many a time, I said, when I was young, and complained that my lessons were too hard, I was desired, not indeed, to throw aside my books, but to read more and more, and again and again, as the means of getting over the difficulty. And in precisely the same way, I added, if you find the Holy Scriptures hard to be understood, read them again and again, and yet again in a prayerful, humble, reverential, believing spirit, and in God's own time you will most certainly find them sufficiently easy in every thing that is necessary for the salvation of your soul.

Our little meeting soon after this dispersed, and I felt perfectly easy as to the general effect of the conversation. In the course of a few following months, I had many private conversations with the young man, who had acted as the advocate of Rome on this occasion. We went through the whole range of the controversy, not in a spirit of controversy, but of inquiry, for his mind was passing through a great change.

Before the year had expired he abandoned the Church of Rome.

He was much influenced by the language in St. Mark viii. 1-13. It strongly dwelt upon his mind, that our Lord and his disciples evidently did not keep or observe these traditions—that he defended his disciples in rejecting them—that he declared that these traditions had the effect of setting aside the Word of God—and, finally, that the Jews rejected the Holy Scriptures, that they might keep their own traditions. In some of our after-conversations he showed that he regarded all this as an illustration of the very same system in the Church of Rome, for that the Jewish priests urged their traditions in precisely the same way, and on the same principles as the Roman Priests. And more than all else, he seemed influenced by his own experience of the Scriptures. They seemed to stream in upon his mind in rays of beautiful light, as he expressed it, like the rays of the sun streaming in through the crimson, and green, and purple, and gold-colored glass of an old church window. They were not only light, but beautiful light that conduced to meditation and prayer. And he did meditate and pray, and suffered much, and in the end escaped his persecutors by emigrating to America.

NOTE.—The following is the rule of the Index, respecting the Holy Scripture, constituting the law of the Church of Rome respecting them.

“Since it is manifest by experience, that if Holy Bibles in the vulgar tongue be permitted every where without discrimination, there will arise more evil than good, owing to the rashness of men; let the decision of the Bishop or Inquisitor be abided by in the matter, so that with the advice of the Confessor or Parish Priest, they may grant the reading of Catholic editions of the Bible in the vulgar tongue, to those whom they shall have ascertained to be likely to derive no harm, but rather an increase of faith and piety from such reading, *which permission they shall have in writing.*

“If any one shall *presume* to read or possess them without such permission, he can not receive the *absolution of his sins*; unless he first gives up the Bible to the Ordinary.

“Booksellers, also, who shall sell Bibles in the vulgar tongue to persons who have not this permission, or who shall give them in any other way, *shall lose the price of the books*—to be appropriated by the Bishop

to charitable purposes ; and *shall be subject to other penalties at the will of the Bishop*, according to the nature of the offense.

"*The Regular Clergy* [that is, the Clergy of the Monastic Orders, Monks and Nuns alike, all being designated as 'regulars'] *can not read them or purchase them*, unless with the permission of their Prelates."

Such is the letter of the Law of the Church of Rome respecting the Holy Scriptures, drawn up by those appointed by the Council of Trent. According to its provisions, we see—First, No one can read or purchase the Scriptures, without the written permission of his Bishop. Second, No Bookseller can sell or dispose of them to other persons, without being liable to penalties, at the pleasure of the Bishop. Third, Even the Monks and Nuns are prohibited from reading the Scriptures, unless with special permission.

This law is always in force. And although it speaks of Catholic editions, there is only one such to be found in Italy—that by Martini, which is in *twenty-three volumes* ! These, however, could be bound in four or six substantial volumes, sufficiently cumbrous and inconvenient.

The price at which it is sold is absolutely prohibitive. I could not procure one at Rome, in 1845, for less than 105 francs, that is, precisely *four guineas* ! The prohibitive nature of this price, may be seen from the fact, that four guineas are regarded as high wages by the year, for a servant-maid at Rome ; so that she would have to give a whole year's wages for a copy of the Scriptures ! And a franc a day is the ordinary pay, *i. e.*, two pauls, for the laboring man. Owing to the number of holydays and Saints' days on which he must not work, he has, on an average, not more than four days, *i. e.*, four francs a week—and thus he would have to give six months' earnings to purchase a copy of the Scriptures !

And yet this is the only one they are permitted to read, even when they can have in writing the permission of the Bishop. They must first have the recommendation of the Priest. They must then have the written permission of the Bishop. They must then give Four Guineas for the Volume ! Is it possible to prohibit it more effectually ?

THE UNITY OF THE CHURCH.

A Young Schoolmaster—The supposed want of Unity in the Protestant Churches—Wherein True Unity consists—Many Local Churches and one Church of Christ—Division is often a Sign of Life, and Unity of Death—Divisions in the Church of Rome—Similar to those among Protestants—Matters of Faith and Discipline—The same Objection urged by Heathens against Christianity—Great Diversities in the Church of Rome—Various Modes of answering the Objection as to want of Unity.

WITHIN a few miles of my parish was a young man, who kept a school and found in that way a very respectable livelihood. His character stood very high as a moral, religious, pious man, very sincerely attached to the Church of Rome, and very observant of all her ordinances. He was, on that account, patronized by all the priests of his church in the neighborhood, as a fitting instructor for the children of the more respectable and wealthy of their congregations, and in consequence of this he was eagerly sought by many, who induced him, after his school hours were over, to visit their families, and impart private instruction to their children. He was thus engaged every evening among the families in the surrounding parishes.

A private communication was one day made to me, to the effect, that this young man's mind had lately become very much impressed with religion—that there was an unusual and intense earnestness about him—that he had undoubtedly been reading the Holy Scriptures—that he seemed drawn toward certain religious Protestants with an apparent desire for religious information—that he was known to spend hours at

night upon his knees in prayer—that something seemed to press upon his mind, for that his lively spirit was gone and he was thoughtful and moody ; and in fine it was suggested to me, that it would be well to take an opportunity of seeing him, and drawing out his mind on religion. This communication was made to me, with a remark to the effect that the young man had spoken of me with the expression of a wish to see me . and that my seeking him would be well-received by him.

I was considering how this might best be done two days afterward, when, late one summer evening, as I was sauntering along the paths in the meadows, I observed him at a little distance. He saw me and entered the house of a respectable Protestant farmer, pausing at the entrance, and looking toward me, as if to let me clearly see where I could find him. At least I so interpreted his manner, and as I well knew this farmer, who was a constant attendant at my church, and was at the same time a Methodist of the old kind, I entered the house.

The farmer was one of those simple, frank, religious men who do every thing in an open way. He told me, in the presence of the young man, that he had had, some days before, some conversation with him about the salvation of his soul—about the Scriptures—and about Popery and Antichrist—that he believed the Lord was doing a work in his heart—and that he thought the young man, like another in the Gospel, was not far from the kingdom of God. He then proposed that we should all kneel down together, and that I should offer a prayer to the Lord for his Holy Spirit, and claim his precious promise, that where two or three were assembled in his name, there he would be in the 'midst. I felt that the old Methodist counseled wisely. "We prayed together. When we arose from our knees, the good farmer said he would withdraw, and he left me with the young man alone.

He was bathed in tears : it was some time before he could arouse himself sufficiently to converse calmly. As might be expected, the conversation was in no degree controversial ; it

ran simply on the convictions of sin, which seemed to have stricken to the innermost depths of his soul; and on the doubts and difficulties he felt as to the grounds of hope of forgiveness. He seemed to feel keenly; he was perfectly open, and thoroughly in earnest. He stated that his views as to sin, and his own natural and habitual sinfulness, had lately been greatly changed and deepened; and that as to the means of counteracting this sinful tendency of his nature, he found nothing satisfactory in all he had learned from his church; and as to the mode of securing the forgiveness of his God; he believed that all his life long he had been altogether astray. His spirit seemed thoroughly crushed and broken; he was looking for help and found none. Our conversation was intensely interesting, but it was in no degree controversial, so far as the Protestant and Romish Churches were concerned. They were never named or alluded to by me, although, as a matter of course, I was necessitated to set forth the great truths of the Holy Scriptures, as concerning the only true means of acceptance with God; and to dwell on the undying consolations of the Gospel, and the fullness and freeness of the offers of Christ. His name at such moments is a tower of strength—a Father of mercies—and a God of all consolation. It will readily be believed that the interview was similar to that which is familiar to every true-hearted and earnest and faithful minister of Christ's Church when dealing with newly awakened and strongly-touched sinners. It was a probing the wounds of sin and then binding them up. It was very much of the same character as many other interviews I have had from time to time with such persons, brought up amid the advantages and privileges of a Protestant land—amid the "green pastures and still waters" of a scriptural Church; but whose hearts had long remained untouched and unimpressed from above, and were at last awakened to a sense of eternal realities, in reference to which their whole lives previously had been nothing but a dream.

Before we separated he told me in reply to my inquiries, that he attended a meeting of the Bible Society at the neigh-

boring town some months before—that a Roman Catholic priest had openly on the platform opposed the proceedings—that a controversy arose among the speakers as to the right of the people to read the Holy Scriptures for themselves—that he left the meeting with a very strong desire to know more of the nature of this volume, respecting which the dissension arose. He had never before read the Holy Scriptures; he now procured a copy, and he stated that it was in reading it his opinions had been modified, and his sense of sinfulness quickened.

We parted for that night, but it was with an arrangement to meet soon again in the same house.

We often met, and we were interested and profited. Gradually error after error was abandoned. And finally, after many months, he forsook the Church of Rome, becoming an earnest, zealous, meek, and faithful Christian. He soon afterward left that part of the country, and after a time emigrated to America.

He often spoke to me of the supposed unity of the Church of Rome, and of the difficulty he had felt respecting the Protestant Churches on account of their many divisions—on account of their want of that unity which was one of the notes or marks of the true church. He was still a member of the Church of Rome, when he first pressed the argument upon me; and he argued it with all his power, for he struggled step by step before he finally abandoned her. He reminded me, that in the Nicene Creed we are said to believe in “One holy, catholic and apostolic church,” and thus we are said to believe the true church to be One, not many—the true and spotless Bride or Spouse of Jesus Christ to be One, not many—that as there was but “One Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, one God and Father of all,” so there was but one church—that as the members of the human frame may be many, yet must be in harmony with each other, so the various branches or members of the church, however many, must be in perfect harmony together—that the language of Holy Scripture seemed to imply this; constantly exhorting Christians “to

think the same thing, to mind the same thing," and "to be of one mind"—that our Lord Jesus Christ himself prayed five times in a single prayer, that his people "might be one."—And that this unity seemed an essential of the Church of Christ. He seemed to think that there was at least an appearance of this in the Church of Rome, while there were endless divisions—innumerable sects—in the Protestant Churches.

This argument he illustrated on different occasions, by different scriptures, as of their being but one fold and one shepherd—as to brethren being at unity among themselves—as to a house divided against itself being sure to fall, etc., etc.

In reply to his difficulties on these points, urged as they were truly and sincerely, and in no partisan spirit, I endeavored to impress on him two or three principles that seemed to me greatly to elucidate this matter.

In the first place, I tried to impress him with the fact that when our Lord spoke of the one fold and the one shepherd, his words contained an allusion to two parties—to the Jews and to the Gentiles.

And his intention was to convey the idea, that there were not to be two distinct churches for these two—that there was not to be one Church, one Saviour, and one mode of salvation for the Jews, and another Church, another Saviour, and another mode of salvation for the Gentiles, but that there was to be but one and the same for both—that the Apostle Paul carries on the same truth, namely, that as he states in Eph. ii. 14–16. "Christ is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; having abolished in his flesh, the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; and that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby." There were thus two bodies to be united into one church. Jews and Gentiles were not to be two but one church. And this I said was to be the true meaning of our professing a belief "in ONE Church."

He said frankly that he had never seen it in that light, and

that it was so far satisfactory, as it explains the reason for its constituting the article of a creed. In fact, he added, in that sense it was an article of faith, but in the common view of it, he never could understand its being inserted in the creed.

In the second place, I endeavored to convince him, that there might be a variety of separate, particular, national, or local churches, which yet might constitute one whole or universal church. I illustrated this by referring him to his Testament, where he could read of the Church of Rome, the Church of Corinth, the Church of Galatia, the Church of Ephesus, the Church of Phillippi, the Church of Thessalonica, the seven Churches of Asia, and especially the Church of Jerusalem. I said, that all these churches seemed distinct, and separate, and perfect churches—that at least the Church of Rome was not made more of in such language than the Church of Corinth, or any other of the churches named—that they all seemed on an equality as particular or local churches, that of Jerusalem being the Mother of all. And I argued that the only difficulty—if indeed it could be called a difficulty at all—was to reconcile this diversity with unity, in other words, to reconcile this number of churches with the Unity of the Church of Christ; but this difficulty is not one of our creating, it is one on the face of Holy Scripture, and for that cause we are not disposed to be much affected by it.

He saw this, and said, it certainly, if a difficulty at all, was a difficulty for which the Protestant principle or Potestant Reformation were not responsible, but he supposed that as the many branches of a tree constitute the one tree, and the many members of the body constitute the one body, so the harmony or union of these several particular or local churches may constitute them into the one Church of Christ. He said he could well understand this, and it was the way in which he had argued the question in his own mind; many persons forming one family, many regiments forming one army, and many nationalities constituting one people. He could therefore well understand this; but in the Church of Christ there must be a harmony of feeling and unity of mind. And this was, as it

seemed to him, the real objection to the divisions in the Protestant Churches.

This induced me to lay before him a further principle, as it was apparent my words were not lost upon him.

Let it be always remembered, I said, that union is not a necessary sign of spiritual life, as disunion is not a necessary evidence of spiritual death. If we enter a church or chapel, and observe the congregation, we are sure to find that however their hearts may be united, yet their minds, habits of thought, and reflection create certain diversities and shades of opinion. There may be union on all that is great and important, though there are diversities on matters of lesser moment. Their very diversities of judgment are a sign of mental activity and of real life. They are not dead. If then we enter the church-yard, and sit beneath the shady cypress and the dark yew, and tread lightly the graves of the departed, there is found no disunion and no diversity there. There is no collision of mind or of feeling. All is peaceful, quiet, calm. This very unity is an evidence of the absence of all real life. They are truly dead, and all the life that is there, is that of the loathsome worm of the grave. And so in spiritual things. There is a union which is a sign of spiritual death, for it argues the absence of all intelligent activity and mental life. And there is a division, which is an evidence of spiritual life, for it proves the existence of mental thought and active intelligence. Among the mummies of Egypt there are no religious differences, for all are dead. In the catacombs of Rome there is the most perfect union, for all are lifeless. Even among the children of the world, thoughtless, reckless as they are, there are no religious disputes, for all are spiritually dead. There are no varieties of opinion among a gallery of marble statues, for a perfect unbroken unity is evidence of death and not of life. The only true unity which is worth having, and which is quite consistent with diversity of sentiment, is the union of holy brotherhood—the union of the children of Christ—the union of Christian heart with Christian heart, and the union of both in Jesus Christ, where,

knowing that a perfect unity of opinion is no more possible, than a perfect similarity of face, and knowing that there may be an agreement on great things, agreeing to bear and forbear, with differences on little things, the hearts of Christians may be united in brotherly love and sympathy, each with the other, and all seek and find the bond of union in Him, who is "the corner-stone in whom all the building, fitly framed together, groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord : in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit."—Eph. ii. 20–22.

And this is the union of the Protestant Churches, or at least this ought to be their union. In the Church of Rome herself, we find an illustration, for she has within her bosom Jesuits, and Jansenists, and Dominicans, and Franciscans, and Augustinians, and Benedictines, and Carmelites, and innumerable other orders or sects, all differing in outward manner, all differing in their rules of life, all differing in their opinions on some particulars, especially having all different practices—superstitious practices, as I think—prevalent among them, and yet they all have this bond of union in the Pope. Whatever be their differences, and sometimes they hate, and villify, and intrigue against one another, acting with the most hateful jealousy and malignant rivalry ; yet they do all find a bond of union in the Pope. It is thus, too, that the several Protestant Churches, with their diversities of forms and sentiments, too often also acting as enemies or rivals to each other, yet find their bond of union in Jesus Christ.

He seemed to like this idea. His mind was in that state of first love for Christ that he was ready to renounce every church, indeed the whole world, for Christ : and he seemed to feel that there could be union with Christ, even when there was union nowhere else. "Surely," said he, warmly, "we two, though of different churches, are united in Jesus !" I responded as warmly.

And this, I contended, is the scriptural view of this matter. The Scriptures speak of a vast variety and number of churches. They speak of the assemblies of Christians in private houses

as churches; they speak of the meetings of believers in isolated towns as churches; they speak of the aggregate of such assemblies or meetings in any extended province as churches, and the compound or aggregate of these is the Church of Christ. The multitude of individual Christians in any place, taken together, constitute the church of that place, and the aggregate of all these churches constitute the Church of Christ. The name of the locality thus given to the church, or the name of some distinctive peculiarity given to a church, no more affects the reality of its Christianity than does the name of the country or the color of the skin affect the reality of the Christian standing of a man. If a man be a true believer and follower of Jesus Christ in the Church of England—if a man be a true believer and faithful follower of Jesus Christ in the non-conforming churches—if a man be a true and faithful follower of Jesus Christ even in the Church of Rome, that man, as he is not a Christian indeed and altogether merely from belonging to these in name, so neither is he excluded from Christianity merely because he assumes the name of these churches. The great rule of Scripture respecting nations is the same respecting churches—"God is no respecter of persons, but in every nation [*church*], he that feareth God and worketh righteousness is accepted of Him." Some churches, as the Protestant, give a large amount of light and opportunity to their members; other churches, as Rome, give comparatively no light, and no opportunities to their members. But still, wherever there is light, and knowledge, and love, and faith in Jesus Christ, *there* then is Christianity, and there is a church, and there will be all the unity of Christian brotherhood and Christian love.

He quite felt with me in all this, remarking with a gentle smile that the house in which we then were, was the house of a Methodist—a Calvinistic Methodist, a true-hearted and believing man. And yet he who was a Roman Catholic found a closer union with that man, Calvinist and Methodist as he was, and with myself, a clergyman of the Protestant Church of England, than with any other two persons he had ever

known. He said with great ingenuousness, that he knew and liked, and respected several of the priests of his own church, and had many a long conversation with them on religious subjects, sometimes in private, and sometimes when many of them were together, but still he had never felt the same union—the same attraction—the same drawing of his heart—the same drawing out of his inner feelings, as he felt toward either of us. He could thus understand the real Christians—the real lovers of Jesus Christ in all the sects, overlooking in others, and forgetting in themselves, the petty differences which separated them, and seeing in each other only a love for their common Saviour, feel themselves more truly united by that bond, than by any thing of peculiar name or peculiar form.

The tone and manner of this interesting young person as he spoke, was far more expressive than his words themselves. There was something so true, so earnest, so ingenuous in his manner, his heart seemed so full, and his eyes at times overflowing with the large tear, that gave a wonderful life and reality to all he said, and coming as it did from one, who was still a member of the Church of Rome, and one who, so far as he then imagined, was never to part from her, his words had, for me, a very especial interest. I felt he could not be long retained where he then was.

We had some conversation as to certain points that to his peculiar phase of mind and feeling were of more than usual interest, and after a time I reverted to the subject of Unity again.

He said, in reply to a few words from me respecting the diversities of the religious or conventual orders, that it was not fair to say, as some of his own Church often said, that such diversities of orders did not imply a diversity of doctrine or practice. He was fully aware that the predestinarian controversy, existing between the Calvinistic and Wesleyan Methodists, was identical with the same controversy between the Jansenists and Jesuits, not indeed as essential to these two orders, but the Jansenists were Calvinists, and the Jesuits were Arminians, and thus the very same controversy raged

between them, which now divides the Protestant Churches—the chief difference being that the Pope interfered, and declining to say which was right or which was wrong, decided on authoritatively suppressing and silencing the controversy, forbidding, under the heaviest penalties of the church, any further discussion of the subject. He added with a smile, that this was a mode of settling a controversy hardly admissible among Protestants.

To this I could not but assent. I added, however, that there was scarcely a subject of controversy among Protestants, that was not also a subject of controversy among Romanists. It is true that they are always talking of their unity;—as they claim to possessing the most perfect unity, so by constantly and repeatedly reiterating the assertion that they have unity in their church, they succeed in making some believe them. The incessant and persevering assertion of many persons reiterating any one statement, is certain to secure a belief among many. But after all, there is not one subject of controversy among Protestants that does not also, to a certain extent, exist among Romanists. That great question already referred to, the question of predestination, is an instance of this. It is equally true respecting others.

He asked me to what I alluded.

I said that one of the most disturbing subjects of strife ever known in England, was that which related to the robes or the dress of the clergy—whether they should robe in white surplices, or black gowns. The very same controversy existed in the Church of Rome, in the various branches of the Mendicant Orders. They seem to rend the whole church to pieces about the length of their hoods, and the color of their robes. The wisdom of the Church of Rome was, that she left them all to wear what they pleased, provided only they submitted to the See of Rome. And after all, what was the difference between many of our sects and the Church of England? It was merely that they did not wish to be under the control and authority of the bishop. They declared themselves independent of him. And the very same system exists at this moment

in the Church of Rome, for the various religious or conventual orders have very generally obtained the privilege of being totally exempt from the authority and jurisdiction of the local bishop. It is one of the privileges of the Order of the Jesuits, that its members are independent of the local bishop. This principle is admitted into the Church of Rome.

He quickly took me up here, and said that I brought to mind that he had often heard that the Jesuit College at Clongowes was exempt from the authority of the bishop, although the College of Maynooth was subject to him.

I said that it was an illustration of my position. But, I added, we can go much further, for whereas many of the diversities among Protestants are mere diversities of form in the services of their different churches, so the very same diversity exists in the Church of Rome. In all the chapels of the Conventual Orders, there is a most marked diversity of practice. Indeed each Order may be known by its peculiar forms—peculiar prayers—peculiar rosaries—peculiar festivals—peculiar holydays—peculiar religious duties. They all differ as widely one from another, as do the services or forms of any of our Protestant Churches. The Church of Rome shows her profound and practical wisdom in licensing each and all. It leaves her people to choose such things for themselves, provided only, they implicitly submit to the authority of the Papal See. I think she is perfectly right in doing so, and only wish she may have many imitators; but what I complain of is, that while such diversities exist in her own body, she charges the Protestant Churches with a want of unity on account of the existence of diversities which also exist within her own bosom.

He said that all this he feared was too true. He knew personally of subjects of endless dispute among such of his church as were earnest and zealous—quite as many as among Protestants; but, he added, that it was generally agreed among Roman Catholics that their differences were small, and related only to small things—that they concerned only *matters of*

discipline, and were never known in *Articles of Faith*. And he asked me how I would answer that ?

I reminded him that that was not universally true. I felt disposed to deal very gently with every argument that came from himself; but he frequently put forward the arguments of others, in order to learn how to deal with them—at least it seemed so to me. I was not disposed to spare such arguments, and therefore I now said, that this was far from being universally true. There were two controversies particularly, to which I would refer: one was as to the seat of Infallibility. Italy and France are hopelessly divided; as to whether Infallibility be vested in the Pope or in a General Council. And hundreds of theologians have spent all their strength in devouring one another like wild beasts, in settling this controversy, which has not yet been decided. Another is the dispute as to the Immaculate Conception; as to whether the Conception of Anna, by which she gave birth to Mary, was as miraculous and free from original sin as the conception of Mary in giving birth to the Messiah. There never arose between two rival sects of Protestants, a controversy carried on with more fiend-like malice and ferocity than that which characterized the disputes between the rival Orders of the Dominicans and Franciscans on this subject. And it must be allowed that these concern matters of the first and last importance in the Church of Rome.

This person was a young man of about my own age—perhaps a year younger—and this parity of years led to much frank and sincere interchange of thought on the subject of religion. He always stated his objections and difficulties whenever he felt any, and very frequently when he felt none, he stated the objections and difficulties of others, so as to learn how I could deal with them. On the present point he said, he knew personally, subjects enough of difference among the zealous of the clergy of his Church.

After some further conversation on his own experience as to such sources of difference, I asked—

Is it not a fact that the differences between the various Prot-

estant Churches are not on articles of Faith, but principally upon mere points of discipline? That one church is governed by Bishops and is called Episcopalian—that another is ruled by a Presbytery, and is thence styled Presbyterian—that a third is founded on the principles of the freedom of the particular church from the authority of any other, and is on that account called Independent—that one church prefers an authorized liturgy—that another chooses a liturgy of her own selection—that a third adopts a settled arrangement of extemporaneous prayer—that one has deacons to regulate its services—that another has church-wardens to attend to its affairs—that a third is carried on without either one or the other—that one church adopts a formal catechismal instruction—that a second prefers a Sunday-school system—that a third has no system at all—that one church prefers administering baptism to infants—that another decides for baptizing adults—that one adopts open-air preaching and class-meetings, and assemblies in barns and out-houses—that another prefers a more formal and regulated system of public service—that one church adopts a black dress for its officiating ministers—that another prefers a white surplice—that a third will have neither one nor the other—these surely are all matters of discipline—all mere trifles that have nothing to do with Articles of Faith. And yet these and such things as these, are the only, or at least the principal points of separation between the various Protestants among us.

He said, laughing, that although it seemed very absurd, yet it was very true. These were not Articles of Faith: they were merely matters of discipline. But are there not also, he asked, some differences on articles of faith?

I said—No. And then added, that when we speak of Articles of Faith, we mean the Articles of our Creeds. Now, our several sects, Church of England, Church of Scotland, Independents, Methodists, Baptists, and generally all the Protestant Churches hold each and all the Articles contained in the Creeds. There may be shades of difference as to the explanation of words and things, but they are all agreed in the

main. My full conviction is that there is as close and compact a union of doctrine in the Protestant Church as in the several churches constituting the body of the Roman Church; while in matters of discipline, it was no easy matter to determine in which the greatest variety was found to exist. The great and plain truth seems to be this—Romanists have their differences about what their Church says, but they agree to refer all to the decision of the Papal See. *There* is their point of unity. Protestants have their differences among themselves about what the Holy Scriptures say, but they are all agreed to refer all to the authority of the Holy Scriptures. *There* is their point of unity.

He was very much struck with this statement; he seemed fully to take it in. It seemed to satisfy the feeling that was at work in his inner mind. He expressed himself very strongly.

I then continued, and asked again—

But what is the real force or strength of this objection? It assumes, that because the Protestant Churches are divided, when they ought to be united, they therefore are not true churches, and there is no truth in Protestantism. Perhaps the simplest mode of dealing with this objection is, by producing a parallel. I will suppose the case of a Jew, or of a Mohammedan, or of a Hindoo, who is asked to become a Christian; he at once refuses on the ground that there is no truth in Christianity. He is pressed for his arguments, and he argues that the Christian Churches are divided—that there are Roman Churches and Greek Churches and Asiatic Churches and Protestant Churches—that they are thus divided when they ought to be united—that as Christianity is one and the Church of Christ one, and the people of Christ desired by Him to be one; so none of these can be true Churches of Christ, and there can be no truth in this Christianity. The argument of the Romanist as against the Protestant Churches, is strictly parallel to the argument of the Jew, the Mussulman, or the Hindoo, as against the Christian Churches at large; and therefore, if there be any force in the argument against

Protestantism on the ground of its divisions, then there is equal force in the argument against Christianity on the ground of its divisions. And if, on the other hand, the Christian may laugh to scorn the objections of the Jew, the Mussulman, and the Hindoo, as against Christianity, then may the Protestant laugh to scorn the objections of the Romanist, as against our Protestantism.

Twenty-seven years have passed away since these conversations, of which the foregoing was a very small portion, were held. Since then I have seen no reason to change my opinions or to depart from my position. On the other hand, I have visited many lands and have been a not inattentive observer of the working of the Church of Rome, both in the city of the church, in Rome herself—and in almost every country in Europe.

That opportunity for observation through many successive years has strengthened my views, and I feel more strongly than ever, that of all the churches of Christendom, the very last that ought to speak of diversities or divisions, is the Church of Rome. It is her boast and pride that she admits and sanctions almost every diversity of doctrine and of discipline, provided there be unity in submission to the Supreme Pontiff of Rome. I have myself witnessed in the church of the Propaganda Fide in Rome, during the season of the Epiphany, no less than five different churches, as the Greek, the Armenian, the Nestorian, the Syriac, the Coptic, as well as the Roman, all celebrating the Lord's Supper, at different altars, and in different ways. The ceremonies were different. The manner of service was different. The forms of worship were different. The languages were different. In short, I have never seen or observed so great a dissimilitude between the Lord's Supper in the Lutheran—the Evangelical, the Episcopalian, the Presbyterian, the non-conforming churches of the Protestant Communion, as I have seen and observed among those sections of the Eastern Churches that are joined in the communion of the Roman Church. I have witnessed seven dif-

ferent forms—seven different liturgies—seven different languages—and seven different modes of celebrating the Lord's Supper, all in the Church of St. Andrea della Valle in Rome. I have witnessed all the Greek rites in a Greek Church—I have seen all the Armenian rites in an Armenian Church in that city. Every diversity of doctrine and liturgy, and discipline, and language, is allowed and formally sanctioned, provided only all parties observe the one point of unity—submission to the supreme Pontiffs of Rome. So far is that carried, that in the Concordats or Articles of agreement with Rome, there are special clauses reserving to whole countries the right to have their own liturgy and rites, and language, in preference to that of the Romish Church.*

In all this the Church of Rome has exhibited her profound worldly policy. She imagines and sanctions the utmost diversities and divisions, but she demands a perfect unity under the Papal See, and therefore she is the very last church in Christendom that should point disparagingly at the diversities or divisions of Protestant Christianity, or should make Unity the essential note or mark of the true Church.

The same remark applies to the religious worship of the various Roman Catholic countries of Europe. No observant traveler will fail to see a very marked difference, amidst much that is similar, between the Roman Catholic religion of Italy—of Germany—of France—of Ireland, and between them all, and that of England. This difference is observable especially in public worship, not indeed in the mass-service, which preserves a sort of unity, but in almost all the other services. The prayers, the litanies, the rosaries, the festivals are different. Even in the litanies to the Virgin Mary, there is as wide a difference between, for example that used in my own presence in Switzerland, at Einsiedlin, and that recited in France, at Paris, as it is possible to conceive. Very frequently the beginning

* Shortly after the Reformation, the Pope offered to sanction the Book of Common Prayer in the Church of England, notwithstanding all its Protestantism, if only the Church of England would acknowledge the authority of the Papal See.

and the end are the same, while a totally new and different series of petitions, form the middle of the litany. I have some of these diverse litanies before me at this moment, having purchased them on the spot. The same remark applies to their forms of prayer. The series of services in the chapels of the monkish establishments is widely different from the services in another of a different order. They are incomparably more diverse than any thing with which I am acquainted in the services of the conformist, or non-conformist churches. And as to items or points of belief, every one who has traveled, is aware of the immense diversities of opinion which prevail as to infallibility—as to the worship of the Virgin Mary—as to the degree of worship due to images and pictures—as to indulgences, penances, etc.

Still her advocates are always vaunting of her unity, and objecting to the want of unity, among Protestant Christians!

When engaged in controversy with Roman Catholics, I have met this objection sometimes in the following way.

I have narrated a scene which I may have witnessed, in which multitudes knelt or prostrated themselves before a little moldy bone, or dirty rag—some shivered splinter of a bone, or thread of some wretched rag, palmed on them as the relic of some saint—superstitiously rubbed their foreheads to it, or devoutly kissed it, and prayed to it in precisely the same way, so far as appearances went, as when adoring the Host on the altar, which they imagine to be their God.

Or I have read from some of their devotional works, published in Roman Catholic countries, long passages expository of their faith, or long prayers illustrating their devotion, or careful directions to govern their practice—passages of such nature as I knew would be rejected and denounced by the hearers, such works being published by authority.

Or, I have stated my having seen the sacrifice of the Mass openly sold in the churches—having myself personally purchased them, and got a receipt formally signed for my money—and this money taken by the priests who were selling them, under pretense of their being able to relieve the souls in Pur-

gatory, and believed by the people who were buying them, to be efficacious to relieve the souls of their departed friends.

Or, I have stated my having seen and examined many pictures and images, reputed to be miraculous, that is, represented as able to work miracles, by the priests, and believed as such by the people—weeping pictures, speaking images, winking Madonnas, etc. And the people in thousands worshipping them and giving money to them which the priests appropriated to themselves.

Or, I have read from works authorized abroad, and sometimes published in this country, statements speaking of the Virgin Mary as Omnipotent, as descending every Saturday night to Purgatory to release her worshipers—as able to command as her Son Jesus Christ; statements practically placing her in the stead of God.

Or, I have stated that I have been present and witnessed members of the Church of Rome, going on their naked knees, in circles round and round upon stones, on the top of a mountain, believing that they removed their sins by the shedding of their own blood streaming from their knees, and stating to myself that they were so taught by their priests.

I have stated these things and things like these to members of the Church of Rome, when boasting of their perfect unity; and they invariably exclaimed against them and against their being supposed to believe such doctrines or to follow such practices. They always reject them, and often denounce them, saying that the Roman Catholics of England ought not to be judged by the Roman Catholics of other countries.

I then ask them, Where is their boasted unity? If thousands in Italy worship moldy bones, and dirty rags, and believe in their miraculous powers, and Roman Catholics of England reject and denounce this, then there is no unity between them and the Roman Catholics of England. If thousands in Spain believe in miraculous images and pictures, and spend their time and their money on them, and if the Roman Catholics of England object to and oppose such superstitions, then it is clear their faith and practice is not at unity with

that of the Roman Catholics of Spain. If millions in France read and believe the strangest doctrines respecting the Virgin Mary, her nature and her powers, and the Roman Catholics of England reject and condemn the books teaching these things, then it is plain there is no unity between them on such points. If the whole population of some countries believe that they can purchase masses, by which to relieve the souls of their friends in Purgatory—and if the priests teach them so and sell the masses, then if the Roman Catholics of England reject and condemn this, it is an evidence that they are not of one mind with the Roman Catholics of those other countries on the subject. If multitudes in some lands believe that they can take away their sins by painful, absurd, and superstitious practices, as that of walking on their knees till the blood streams from them, and if the Roman Catholics of England refuse to hold the same belief or to do the same penance, then it is practical evidence of a wide difference of belief and practice, and of the absence of the unity of which they speak so much.

I have found by experience that this mode of arguing is frequently very successful in silencing some persons. The clearly describing practices like these, or the reading an objectionable passage from some of their books, and asking them whether they approve the one or believe the other, will very often elicit a reply that will illustrate a want of unity; and illustrate it in such a way as will be very effective upon all who witness it. At least I have frequently found persons sorely troubled, and sometimes entirely silenced by it. And therefore, whenever they deny or reject or denounce any such doctrine or practice or writing, I always remind them that their doing so is an evidence of as great a difference of private judgment in the Roman Churches as in the Protestant Churches.

I have frequently witnessed the effects of another mode of dealing, with those who argue in a spirit of controversy and vaunt the unity of their Church, against the divisions among Protestants. They boldly claim the most perfect and entire

unity, saying that although there may be differences, as to matters of discipline, yet every one through the whole church is in the most perfect accord on every *article of Faith*. It is perfectly surprising and sometimes imposing, how confidently this assertion is hazarded.

I have asked such persons, especially when many are present, whether they believe that Protestants, being out of the Roman Church, can be saved ?

Being afraid of being thought illiberal and bigoted, especially when many persons are present, they usually answer in the affirmative—that Protestants *may* be saved out of the Church of Rome.

I have then read the article of their creed : after specifying transubstantiation, purgatory, indulgences, papal supremacy, etc., and asserting these to be the Catholic faith of the Roman Church, it goes on to say, "This is the true Catholic faith, out of which no man can be saved." Here then is an article of faith. Do you believe it ?

If there are many Roman Catholics present, this question is certain to divide them, and on such occasions, it is perfectly surprising to witness the violent evidence they give, showing how little unity exists among them on this "article of Faith."

The desire of some to adhere to this creed, and the desire of others to be thought liberal, leads to strange collisions. It always puts an end to any previous boasting on the subject of unity.

THE HOLINESS OF THE CHURCH.

A Conversation on the Holiness of Churches—The Claim of the Church of Rome as the alone "Holy Church"—Her first ground, Holiness of Doctrine—This as applicable to other Churches—Contradiction of the Church of Rome—Her second, Holy Sacraments—Her third, Holy Saints—This Examined—Martin Luther and Henry VIII.—The Objection as connected with their Names Answered.

THERE was in a parish several miles distant from me, a small knot of very active and zealous members of the Church of Rome. They used to meet often, and by books and conversation managed to make themselves up on controverted subjects. Some of them distinguished themselves by their steady, determined opposition to the movement at work, at that time, in the minds of the masses, and they not unfrequently used to challenge the more earnest and best-informed Protestants, to discuss the contested points of doctrine and discipline.

One of these was a clever, intelligent man. He was the head of the Carmelites or Scapularians in the district, and was much looked up to by the peasantry, as a right, proper man. He was shrewd and sharp, but cold and unimpressible. His temper was perfect equanimity itself. No one could speak a word that could change the still, immovable expression of his features. He was as a marble, or rather a wooden statue, when speaking or inquiring. And yet his appearance was prepossessing. A bald head, a smooth chin, a sleek shining face, a quick, keen, dark eye, a nose intensely Irish, and presenting altogether, a neat, clean, precise-looking personage.

He was the head of the confraternity of Carmelites or Scapularians of the district. These persons all wear a scapular inside their clothes, near the left shoulder. They meet together for the purpose of praying souls out of Purgatory, and

they believe—it is a privilege granted to all that wear the scapular in life, a privilege secured to them on the faith of a Papal Bull—that the Virgin Mary descends every Saturday night to Purgatory, and bears with her to heaven all who have worn the scapular.

This man was supposed to be such a master of religion that he could easily confute every argument that could be advanced by me. Some of his fellow-parishioners, who were inquiring into religious things for themselves, and who yet had great confidence in him, proposed that there should be a meeting between us in the presence of some twenty of their members. We met at the house of a Roman Catholic farmer, and the question proposed was, *The True Church*.

He commenced by stating that the Church is holy—that it is one of the notes or marks of the true Church that it is holy—that in the creed called the Nicene, and which is received by Romanists and Protestants alike, it is called the “one holy Catholic and Apostolic Church,” and in the Apostles’ Creed is called “the Holy Catholic Church;” and that this note or mark of holiness was to be the test by which the claim of any Church must be tried, if it claims to be the true Church of Jesus Christ. He then referred to a number of places in Holy Scripture, in which it is stated that the people of God should be a holy people; as, “Ye are an holy nation,” and “Be ye holy, for the Lord our God is holy,” and “Without holiness no man shall see the Lord.” And thus, as he conceived, he proved that holiness was an essential mark of the true Church, concluding by asking me whether I assented to his statement.

I immediately assented, saying, that there could be no doubt or question as to the necessity for holiness. God is a holy God; the Saviour is a holy Saviour; the Spirit is a holy Spirit; and, therefore, every doctrine revealed of God must necessarily be a holy doctrine; and every practice taught of God must be a holy practice. His heavens, I added, are a holy place; His angels are holy angels; His redeemed and glorified people are a holy people. And in the Holy Scrip-

tures the name given to all His people on earth is that of "saints," which means "holy ones," or "sanctified ones." There can be no doubt or question, therefore, that holiness, in the meaning of the Scriptures, is a fitting test to try every doctrine and every practice, and a mark or note of the true Church: a church must be a holy church.

This admission on my part seemed to give him great satisfaction. He seemed to have expected a different answer, though it was difficult to imagine on what grounds. At all events, he expressed himself greatly pleased, as if relieved of the necessity for proving his position.

He then said, that holiness being a mark or note of the true Church, as had been admitted by me, the next point for him to prove was, that this note or mark belonged to the Church of Rome. Now, a church, he added, may be holy in three different ways. She may have, in the first place, holiness of doctrine—that is, that all her doctrines are holy; or she may have, in the second place, the means, the sacramental means, of imparting holiness to her members; or, lastly, she may have produced and nourished and perfected the most holy saints as her children. A church, he added, in conclusion, may be holy in any one of these three particulars; but, if a church has each and all of them at the same time, then indeed she is a holy church; and this—this, he said emphatically, is the Church of Rome; for all her doctrines are holy—all her sacraments are means to holiness—and all the saints were her members.

I was pleased with the precision of his statements, saying, that it would enable all our hearers to understand the argument clearly; and I suggested that we should take each of these three particulars separately, and examine their applicability to our respective churches. I suggested that this would be our easiest course for ourselves, as well as the most simple and intelligible for our hearers. This suggestion met with universal approval, so I begged of him to state the first particular.

He was a precise and methodical controversialist in the

beaten track, as laid down in most of the controversial works of his church ; so he said, that all the doctrines of the Church of Rome were holy. The doctrine of the Trinity, of the God-head of the Son, Jesus Christ, of the Personality of the Holy Ghost, of the incarnation, of the atonement, of regeneration, of sanctification, of redemption—all these doctrines were holy doctrinea, and the Church of Rome, which holds and teaches them, must be a holy church. He then opened Milner's "End of Controversy," and read the same argument from him in these words : "It is time to speak of the doctrine of the Catholic Church. If this was once Holy, namely in the Apostolic age, it is Holy still, because the church never changes her doctrines, nor suffers any persons in her communion to change it, or to question any part of it. Hence the adorable mysteries of the Trinity, the Incarnation, etc., taught by Christ and his Apostles, and defined by the four first general councils, are now as firmly believed by every real Catholic, throughout the whole communion, as they were when these councils were held." Such, he added, was his argument, proving that the doctrines of his church were holy doctrines ; and, therefore, the Church of Rome was a holy church.

I replied, by saying, that all the doctrines he had specified were certainly holy doctrines. And that every one of them were held in our Protestant Churches, as strongly, as clearly, and as fully as the Roman Churches. The Trinity, the God-head of Jesus Christ, of the Holy Spirit, the Incarnation, the Atonement, etc., were all held among us as well as among them. And therefore, if this is to be the evidence of holiness of doctrines, then the Protestant Churches are fully as holy as the Roman Churches, and there can be no exclusive claim to this epithet ; and thus we have as much right to call ourselves "the *Holy* Catholic Church" as any other in Christendom. I appealed to all present, and then to himself, as to whether it was not a fact that the Protestants—especially the Church of England in her Articles—quite as much as the Romanists held these doctrines, and whether this fact, so far

as it went, did not give us as much claim to the epithet of "Holy."

I perceived at once, that the persons present saw the argument as clearly as myself; so I continued and said, that the question was not as to the holiness of those doctrines which both our churches hold alike, but of those on which we differ. There are some things on which both churches are agreed. There are others on which we differ. The real question is—whether those doctrines of the Church of Rome, on which we differ, and which we reject, are holy doctrines? Here, I said, here, for example, is the creed of the Church of Rome, commonly called the creed of Pope Pius. In this creed—now the recognized creed of the Church of Rome—are, first of all, the articles of the Nicene Creed, and secondly, all the articles of the Council of Trent added to them. Now the question at present between us is not, as to the holiness of the former articles, but as to the latter. These are—the supremacy of Peter, the authority of the Church of Rome, the doctrine of a purgatory, the doctrine of indulgences, of masses for the dead, of images and relics, and all such things as are peculiar to the Church of Rome. The question between us is, as to whether these are holy doctrines—so holy as to secure to your church the title of "the Holy Church," and to deprive us of that title because we reject them. We feel that they are unscriptural and therefore unholy.

There was here a pause, as my opponent gave no answer or explanation.

I asked him to prove that these peculiar doctrines, especially that of purgatory and of indulgences, were holy.

He was still silent. He seemed perplexed, and all present seemed more interested than ever.

I then continued, saying that there were two considerations in favor of our Protestant Christianity. In the first place, all its doctrines in the Holy Scriptures, were drawn from them were founded on them, and on them alone. They were all in the holy word of the holy God; and, therefore, they must necessarily be holy doctrines. On that point there can

be no dispute. In the next place, all its doctrines are received and believed in the Church of Rome herself, and therefore she must allow those to be holy; for example, we believe two sacraments, Baptism and the Lord's Supper: the Church of Rome believes them also. We believe the Holy Scriptures to be the word of God, and so far a rule of faith; the Church of Rome believes this also. We believe in the intercession of Jesus Christ; the Church of Rome believes it also. She may indeed add, and does add, five other nominal sacraments to our two, and adds tradition to our Scriptures, and adds the intercession of Mary and the saints to Christ's; but still she believes and admits all ours. And so with all the other points of difference; she holds all the doctrines of our Protestant Christianity, however she may add to them. And, therefore, she must acknowledge our doctrines to be holy; and therefore so far as doctrines go, she must acknowledge that our church has a good claim to the title of a holy church.

To this the only reply was, that the Protestant Church had not so many or so effectual means of promoting holiness in her members; for although her doctrines were certainly held likewise by the Church of Rome, yet she had not in the sacraments so many means of imparting the grace of holiness to her members. The Protestant had but two, while the Church of Rome had seven.

I reminded him that that was the second way in which her members were to test the claim to holiness—that the first was the holiness of doctrine: that now he seemed to have abandoned that, and to have entered on the second test, namely, the sacramental means of imparting holiness.

He acknowledged this.

I, therefore, reminded him, that the Protestant Churches had the sacraments also, as well as the Church of Rome—that they had the sacrament of Baptism which Christ appointed—that they had the sacrament of the Lord's Supper which Christ instituted; and that, therefore, whatever special means of sanctity or holiness are found in the sacramental rites, they

are not the exclusive property of either church, they must belong to both alike.

He said, that all this might be true, so far as these two sacraments are concerned, but these were only two, and the Protestant Churches had only these two. The Church of Rome had five others, Confirmation, Penance, Marriage, Orders, and Extreme Unction. And thus she had five additional means of sacramental grace, over and beside the two that Protestants possessed. This was uttered in a tone and manner that argued the speaker's conviction of having set the argument at rest. And it seemed to have weight with our hearers.

I asked him quietly, perhaps humbly, whether he did not agree with me that the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper were the two greatest of all the sacraments, as being the two specially appointed by Christ himself.

He said, that it might, perhaps, be so—that he believed so.

I then reminded him, that we had those two sacraments that are admitted to be the greatest and most precious—the two appointed by Christ himself. And now, I continued, have we not all the others also, except one? We have Confirmation, although we do not call it a sacrament, so that we have the thing, though not the name. We have Confession and Repentance, not indeed to the ear of a man, but to God himself. We have Orders, for we are as strict in ordaining ministers as the Church of Rome herself. We have Marriage as fully as in any other church. It is true we do not give the name of sacrament to these rites, but we have them, we have the rites themselves under their own proper names. And, therefore, whatever means of sanctity or holiness may be in them, they belong to us as much as to the Church of Rome. We do not call Confirmation a sacrament, for it was not appointed as such by Christ: we do not call Confession and Penance a sacrament, as it never was so appointed, but we insist on confession of sin to God, and the necessity of repentance toward God. We do not call Marriage a sacrament of the Gospel, for it began in Paradise and exists among Jews

and Heathens as much as among Christians. Neither do we call Orders a sacrament, for it was never so appointed by Christ. Whatever is valuable in any or all of these, we have retained; we retain the things themselves, with the alone exception of Extreme Unction, and we reject it, because it was never appointed by Christ. And thus if there be any special means of sanctity or holiness in these ordinances, then we have them in all our churches as much as in the Church of Rome.

He seemed to hesitate here, as if he had not seen the point in this light before.

I therefore asked him to name any one real means of grace, or holiness in the Church of Rome, which we did not also possess.

On his still hesitating, I said that I would speak a few words on two remarkable contradictions in the nominal sacraments of his Church. One in relation to marriage, and the other, to extreme unction.

The first is this.—She holds that celibacy is a state more holy than matrimony—that unmarried people as such, are more holy than married people as such. Now all this may seem to me to be very absurd, or very unscriptural, or very wrong, but still it is very intelligible. I can fully understand it. But contrary to this, is another doctrine which teaches that the sacraments confer more grace, giving an increase of grace; so that after receiving a sacrament, we have more holiness than before. Now, among these sacraments, which thus confer an increase of grace, is matrimony; and therefore the sacrament of matrimony confers a larger amount of the grace of holiness than before. Here, then, is the contradiction. Celibacy is held to be a state more holy than matrimony. And yet matrimony, as a living sacrament, confers more holy grace on the married; though all the while it is a state less holy than celibacy;—this contradiction, I said, has never yet been explained to my satisfaction.

Some of those present seemed greatly amused at this contradiction; and though I paused for an explanation, my op-

ponent had nothing to offer. I therefore said that I would direct attention to a curious contradiction involved in the supposed sacrament of extreme unction. When we ask of what value it is, and what special work does it accomplish on the believer, they reply that it takes away the "relics or remainders" of sins, which had not been taken away by the previous sacraments. Now this language implies an impeachment of the efficiency of the preceding absolution, whether in the administration of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, or in the sacrament of penance; for if that absolution was complete, valid, and effective, it must have absolved all the sins; and yet it is now said that extreme unction takes away the "relics or remainders" of sins! Either the absolution was effective, and then the extreme unction is useless, or the extreme unction was effective, and then the absolution is worthless. And so again there seems a contradiction between extreme unction and Purgatory; for if extreme unction took away all the "relics or remainders" of sins, then there can be nothing remaining for Purgatory to purge away. And if there be any thing for Purgatory to remove, it plainly implies that neither the absolution has taken away all the sins, nor extreme unction all the "relics or remainders," or there certainly could have been nothing at least of the guilt for purgatory to remove.

All this seemed plain enough, and yet on asking my opponent to resolve the apparent contradiction, he evidently was embarrassed. He said, in reference to Purgatory, that it purged away the suffering or penance—the temporal punishment due for the sins, and not the guilt of the sin. This, he said, was removed by the sacraments. As to the other part of the difficulty, however, he was perfectly silent.

A shrewd man, who was present, asked him whether the absolution given by the priest did not take away all the guilt, and whether, when the sick man had received the communion, in a fit state of mind—that is, confessed and contrite, all the guilt of his sins was not removed? He said he much wished for an answer to that question. Digitized by Google

Our friend was sadly perplexed at this, especially when thus put to him by one of his co-religionists, but he continued silent ; so the question was repeated, and all present watched for an explanation, but it never came. They were evidently disappointed.

I suggested our passing to the third mark of holiness.

He said that there could be no dispute on that point, for the Protestants could make no claim to the holy saints. The Protestant Church has never produced one single holy saint. She might boast of Martin Luther, who broke his vows of celibacy and married a nun, who also broke her vows ; she might boast of Henry VIII. with his multitude of wives, but she could not produce one single holy saint. Now the Church of Rome produced all the saints ; she is holy, for she is the blessed mother of all the saints ; all the saints were members of the Church of Rome, belonged to her communion, and held all her articles of faith.

This statement—apparently made in a tone to regain lost influence—was not without some influence upon our hearers, and I saw that they were waiting for my reply. I merely asked him to be so kind as to repeat for me the “Confiteor,” or form of confession.

He complied.—“I confess to Almighty God, to the blessed Virgin,” etc.

And now, said I, that you have so kindly given to me the names of the Virgin Mary and the principal Apostles, the names of those you call the queen of saints, and chief and greatest of all the saints, I should like to know whether they belonged to the Church of Rome ? This question elicited a smile that showed how all present felt its point. I therefore continued, We never read that the Virgin Mary was a member of the Church of Rome. The Scriptures speak of her only at Jerusalem. We never read that John the Baptist was ever at Rome. The Scriptures speak of him only nigh to Jerusalem. As to Peter, and Paul, and James, and John ; and all the Apostles, we never read of them as members of the Church of Rome. Some of them may have visited that city ;

but we read of them all in the Scriptures, as members of the first of all churches, the Church of Jerusalem.

He acknowledged this so far as the Virgin Mary and John the Baptist were concerned ; and added that he did not mean in what he had said to refer to them, but only to the later saints—St. Augustine, St. Cyprian, St. Chrysostom, St. Ignatius, St. Ambrose, and to such holy and blessed ones as St. Dominic, St. Francis, St. Bernard. All these belonged to the Church of Rome. They all lived and died before the Protestant Reformation.

I am sure, I replied, with all possible courtesy, you will at once acknowledge your mistake here, when I ask you of what place St. Augustine was the bishop ?

He replied—Hippo, in Africa.

And, I continued—St. Chrysostom, where was he bishop ?

He replied at once—Constantinople.

Then, said I, you will at once acknowledge that neither one nor the other belonged to the Church of Rome. Hippo was in Africa, and St. Augustine was a bishop of the ancient African Church, and not of the Roman Church. And, as Constantinople was then, and is still the chief city of the Greek or Eastern Church, so St. Chrysostom belonged to the Greek or Eastern Church, and not to the Roman or Western Church. And so with many others of these saints ; they never belonged to the Church of Rome. But as for the so-called saints of later times, I see no force in the argument, and for this reason—all these so-called saints are saints of her own choosing, and naming, and canonizing ; and as Protestants do not pretend to canonize saints, so the Church of Rome has it all to herself. She canonizes only her own. The Pope is not likely to canonize a Protestant—any one not of his own communion ; and therefore, he may very easily say that all the saints are members of his church.

Our hearers smiled at this, and seemed to feel it was answer enough to the argument.

There was no more said by my opponent, and I proceeded to argue that he had given no sufficient grounds for his asser-

tion that the Church of Rome alone had a right to regard herself as the "one HOLY Church." The Protestant churches could all claim the epithet with as good a reason, if the question was to be decided by holiness of doctrine—holiness of sacraments—or holiness of members.

But, said one of those present, a church that came from Martin Luther and Henry VIII, could not be a holy church; for one broke his vows and was a perjured man, and the other was a man of lust who murdered his wives. They were a queer sort of saints.

I replied to this man, that Martin Luther was a Roman Catholic priest or monk—that he had taken the usual vows against marrying—that he lived at a time when priests and monks, though they did not marry wives of their own, were disgracefully intimate with the wives of other men—that Martin Luther saw this with his own eyes, and knew it was the common practice of his brother priests and monks, and thought it better that they should have wives—honestly have wives of their own than dishonestly live with the wives of other men—that thinking this he resolved to marry, and so married one who had been a nun, and who preferred living honestly and modestly as his lawful wife, to living dishonestly and immodestly, as did too many of her sister-nuns. And, I added, as for Henry VIII, it is not for me or any Protestant to defend him. He was born of Roman Catholic parents—baptized in the Church of Rome—educated as a Roman Catholic—ascended the throne as a member of the Church of Rome—wrote a book in support of the seven sacraments, and in it abused Martin Luther to the utmost—put Protestants to death for not believing transubstantiation—died, leaving money in his will for masses for his soul in Purgatory. The wretched man was a Roman Catholic born, bred, educated;—and quarreled only with Rome on the subject of the Pope's authority. He broke with the Pope on the subject of his authority, but always held the doctrines of the Church of Rome. Whatever were his faults, they were the faults of his Roman Catholic education.

But have you ever heard of some of the Popes of the Church of Rome? The world has never in all the times of heathenism known such monsters of vice, filthiness, savageness, and atrocity, as some of them. There was no sin that could be named that was not perpetrated by some of them.

O, but, exclaimed our friend, we don't look upon the Popes personally as infallible. They may have been very bad men, as private men, and yet as the head of the church they may have been infallible.

I said the question was not as to their infallibility, but if it be objected against Protestants, that Martin Luther married a nun, and that Henry VIII. was a monster of crime, I answer that there were twenty popes incomparably worse in all vice and immorality, and in the perpetration of the most bloody and atrocious crimes. But, I added, neither church is to be judged by the bad men that may be found within them. They must be tried by the word of God. The great question for our churches is, whether they hold the holy doctrines and practice, the holy discipline taught in holy word of our holy God—whether they teach the people holiness of doctrine and holiness of practice; and so teach them that the people receive holy doctrines, and carry out holy practice in their lives. This is the great question for us all, and I said I would confidently appeal to all present whether they did not think the Protestant clergy in their neighborhood at least as holy, as religious, as full of good works, and charity among the poor, as any of the Roman Catholic clergy. And whether they did not find that their Protestant neighbors were quite as holy and as moral and ready to do good to all around them, as any of their Roman Catholic neighbors?

With one voice they acknowledged this.

I said, therefore, that I could not see wherein the Church of Rome was more holy than the Church of England. And that I could not make out why the Church of England had not as much right as the Church of Rome to be called "the Holy Church." I was sure of this, I added, that God's holy word—God's Holy Scriptures—are the fountain of all holy

knowledge; and that so long as we keep close to them, and read, and study, and love, and conform our hearts, and minds, and lives to them, praying for the light and teaching, and grace of the Holy Spirit, we shall be members of that church of which God is the Father, and Jesus Christ the Saviour, and the Holy Ghost the Sanctifier.

There was little else said on this occasion, and I felt that the confidence of the parties present was much shaken as to the person who acted as their spokesman. He had led them to expect a wonderful triumph over me. He left my presence much humbled.

THE CATHOLICITY OF THE CHURCH.

Whether the Church of England be the Catholic Church—A Branch of it—Meaning of the Terms, Church and Catholic—Application of the Name to the Church of Rome—Meaning of the Words in the Creed—The Invisible as distinct from the Visible Church—The gradual Decay and Diminution of the Church of Rome—Comparison of Numbers.

In the times of much controversy in Ireland, it was not uncommon for invitations, somewhat in the form of challenges to public discussion, to pass between the opponent churches; or, more correctly expressing it, between the more active and zealous partisans of Romanism and Protestantism.

However strange such a mode of procedure may appear to some minds, it had great attractions, because great suitability for that phase of mind peculiar to the population of Ireland. The clergy who took an active lead in controversy were universally the favorites of the people. They always regarded the challenger as a bold, brave, earnest, and sincere man—as one who did not fear to let the light in upon his principles or practices. And on the other hand, whenever a challenge was refused without good and valid cause in the estimation of the people, the individual fell invariably in public esteem, as one who was unable to defend his principles, or who was afraid to have his practices exposed. It was a strange state of things.

I undertook the charge of a parish for a few weeks for a brother curate who was weak in health. The Roman Catholic Priest was supposed to be a bold, fearless, and able man, who was constantly from the altar denouncing the Protestant clergy and Protestant people, pouring ridicule in unsparing measure

upon their religion, challenging by name the weak and consumptive, and indeed dying man, who was curate of the parish, and who, whatever was his will, was wholly without the physical strength requisite for such a strife.

I was fully aware of the proceedings of this polemical priest, and of the sort of moral influence he had obtained over the people by his fearless bearing. I watched for the opportunity to diminish it; but, before I could possibly take any step in the affair, I was startled by the visit of five Roman Catholics, all respectable peasants of the place, who announced themselves as deputed by a large number of their co-religionists, to request me to accept the challenge of their priest; expressing themselves as anxious for inquiry, and prepared to bear me through it. I felt that my position was a strange one, considering the parties who made the request. And being then young, zealous, ardent, and confident in the cause I had to defend, I acceded, perhaps, rather hastily to the request.

The very same evening the priest delivered a controversial lecture in the parish chapel against the doctrines of the Protestants; and again, as on former occasions, threw down a challenge to all Protestant clergymen to defend their church against him; stating that he would not go to public meetings, but would there, in that very chapel, receive any Protestant clergyman and discuss the subject before his whole congregation.

This challenge causing no slight sensation in the neighborhood, was immediately communicated to me, by the same parties. I declared my readiness to accept it, and only waited till the priest should name the subject for discussion. On the following week he challenged me from the altar, to prove the Church of England to be the "holy Catholic Church," mentioned in the Apostle's creed. I replied to the deputation who informed me of this, that I could not undertake to prove her to be "*the* holy Catholic Church," because I could not prove that a part was the whole; but that I would undertake to prove that it was a part, a portion, a branch of "the holy Catholic Church." I pointed out to them the reason of this distinction,

as I could not prove that any *particular* church, was the *universal* church—the Church of Christ. They were perfectly satisfied with this, which they seemed fully to understand ; and I therefore declared my intention of attending at the Roman Catholic chapel on the next evening of lecture, and entering on the discussion, if they and their priest were so disposed.

I went there at the usual hour, accompanied by another clergyman. As I approached the chapel, the former deputation, accompanied by a crowd of other Roman Catholics, came forward to meet and receive me, and taking me bodily into their center, so as none but themselves could touch me, they entered. The whole congregation, who were all standing and listening to the controversial lecture of their priest, instantly divided, making an open way for the deputation and myself till was I safely deposited, face to face with the priest, at the foot of the altar. That the priest was taken by surprise, was very apparent. He had never expected such a scene. He continued his address for a short time, and then in a few confused and hurried sentences concluded his lecture, and was withdrawing to the vestry—perhaps to prepare for the coming discussion. According to an arrangement, already made with the deputation, I immediately placed in the hands of the priest, as he was withdrawing, a letter—a written acceptance of his proposal, and expressing my willingness to enter on the discussion at that moment before the congregation. The expectation and excitement of the people was intense, as they saw him reading my letter, and as they waited for the discussion which to them seemed inevitable, after all his previous challenges. He read the letter carefully, and slowly folded it up—said with a loud voice, that the Church of Rome was “the holy Catholic Church”—that they were already in possession of the church, and did not need any further inquiry or search after it—for that they need not search for what they had already found ! And saying this, he instantly left the altar, and withdrew to the vestry.

I shall never forget the scene at this moment. The deep disappointment of the people—the strong resentment at what

they called his fears—the bold request of many that I would take his place at the altar, and address them—and above all the excited and stormy character of the disordered congregation, were almost appalling. I felt unnerved at the moment, and almost regretted having gone so far, till higher thoughts came to my aid, and I felt that He, whom I desired to serve, could sustain me—and he did both counsel and sustain me. It flashed across my mind that if I accepted the invitation of the people, and addressed them in that place, it would be putting myself into the power of the law, which would be most unwise; I therefore declined, but added to those about me that I would withdraw from the chapel and address them outside. We withdrew, and being accompanied by about one third of the congregation, we entered a large school-house, and there I addressed at some length, a deeply attentive congregation of several hundreds of Roman Catholics.

The Priest never again delivered a challenge, or even another lecture against the Protestant church.

This circumstance led to the visits of many persons, anxious for information on certain questions of controversy.

It is of vast importance to the right conduct of our controversy with Rome, that we be very careful as to our statements. That the Church of England is a part or branch of the Church of Christ, is a most certain truth. That she is *the* Church of Christ is as certainly an untruth. This distinction is very obvious, and yet from a neglect of this distinction among Protestants, they have fallen into inextricable difficulties. And the Romanists know this, and therefore constantly ask us to prove that our church is *the Church of Christ*. The answer on all such occasions, should be, that we would undertake to prove our national and particular church to be, not *the* church of Christ, but *a* Church of Christ, as being a part or branch—a particular church among the many, the aggregate of which constitutes the one Catholic or universal church.

In a discussion on this subject, on which I was at this time engaged in private, it was urged by my opponent that the church of Rome had extended through all time, and had

spread over all nations—that in this respect she had far exceeded all other churches, which were of more modern growth, and of more limited and merely local extent—that for antiquity and extent no other church can hold comparison with her,—and that as she alone can make any claim to be Catholic, that is, universal, so she alone is “the Catholic Church” of the creeds.

The answer I have ever found most effectual to this, is a fair explanation of the terms. I have therefore laid down two things :

First, I have called to mind that the word “Church,” as it occurs in Holy Scripture, simply means an assembly or congregation, even a civil or political assembly, as in Acts xix. 39, and 41, when it was merely a civil meeting:—that it is sometimes applied to the little congregation of Christians assembled in a private house, as in Col. iv. 15: sometimes to the larger congregations of Christian persons assembled in one town or city, as in Rom. xvi. 1; sometimes to the aggregate of the several congregations, that may be found in any province or country; as in 1 Cor. xvi. 1. And sometimes it is applied to the aggregate of all these particular churches of Christ, as constituting the Church of God,—the church of the redeemed—“the church militant here on earth,” while at other times it has a wider range, embracing both the Church below, and the Church above, that is, the universal or Catholic Church of Christ, “the general assembly and Church of the first-born, whose names are written in Heaven,” as Heb. xii. 28.

Secondly, I have endeavored to settle well and clearly, the meaning of the phrase “the Catholic Church.” The word “catholic” signifies “all” or “whole” or “universal.” So that it is clear, that “the Catholic Church” does not mean, merely a particular church, assembled in any private house, nor merely a particular church, assembling in any special town or city, nor merely any aggregate of churches, collected in any one country, or province, or nation. It does not mean any particular church or churches, but “all,” the “whole,” or

“universal,” of the Churches of Christ, taken in the aggregate or collective aspect.

The necessary consequence of this, as I have endeavored to press on my opponents, is, that if the Church of England called herself “the Catholic Church,” it would be an unwarrantable assumption in making herself the whole, universal Church, and therefore, when persons talk of an Anglo-Catholic Church, that is of an English universal Church, they only betray their own inaccuracy; “knowing neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm;” unless they merely mean a particular church in union with all the other churches. And it is precisely the same with the Church of Rome. When she calls herself “the Catholic Church,” it is an assumption as unwarrantable as it is inconsistent; for as her very name implies, she is only a local or national church, a particular church, and therefore can not possibly be the universal church, unless she merely means that she is in connection with all the other churches. And though, from the unwillingness among us to quarrel about names, we generally allow her to call herself any names she pleases, yet this name by which she is so generally called—“the Roman Catholic Church,” is really tantamount to calling her “the particular universal church.”

It is often argued by the advocates of the Church of Rome, that the phrase of the Creed, “I believe in the holy Catholic Church,” must have some more definite application—application to some one visible and outward church, which is universal or catholic; and they can recognize none worthy of the name but the Church of Rome. The answer to this is, that when we employ these words in the Creed, and say that we believe there is a Catholic Church, we are bound to say clearly and distinctly what we believe. As we have already settled clearly that it is not a belief in any one local, national, particular church, neither the Greek Church, nor the Roman Church, nor the Scotch Church, nor the English Church; so we must next settle as clearly, and have it closely settled in our minds, what we do believe.

In order to do this, we must be careful—we can not be too

careful, for it is the key to the whole subject—to remember that the words occur in the creed, and that a creed, as the word means, is a series of truths or things in which you *believe*. They are not things which you see, but things which you see not—not things visible, but things invisible. It is, only in things unseen and invisible we are said to believe, for things visible or seen we are said to see and know, and not merely to believe in them. If, therefore, you examine the articles of the creed, you will at once perceive that they all are things which we have not seen and can not see, being things unseen and invisible. “I believe in God,” He is invisible; “the maker of heaven and earth;” He was unseen of us when he made it. “And in Jesus Christ his only Son”—we have not seen him, and yet we believe in him; and so on with every other article separately. They all are declarations as to what we have not seen, but still we believe. “I believe in the Holy Ghost,” we see him not; “The communion of saints,” we see not the saints above, and we know not who are the saints even here below; “the forgiveness of sins” is a privilege invisible, and can only be believed and felt; “the resurrection of the body” is that which we have never seen and yet we believe it shall be; “and the life everlasting” is likewise a thing unseen and invisible now, but one which we believe and expect.

Thus all the articles concern unseen and invisible things. And inasmuch as “the Catholic Church” is placed in the midst of those articles, so it evidently means that unseen and invisible body of redeemed and saved souls, both of the church above, and of the church below, which is the true church of Jesus Christ; it is that which we usually speak of, as the spiritual and invisible church. It can not mean that which is called the “visible church,” the body of baptized and professing Christians whom we see, and can easily see, because they are visible. It can not possibly be this, for as the whole creed embodies only those things which are unseen and invisible to us now, so it can not on any honest system of interpretation be applied to any or to all the seen and visible churches on

earth. The article of the creed, therefore, must mean a belief in that body of faithful ones, who are unseen, and unknown of human eye, but who are seen and known of the Saviour: "The Lord knoweth them that are his," and who constitute "the general assembly and church of the first-born, whose names are written in heaven." Thus the church triumphant above and the church still militant on earth—these, whose individual members are unseen and unknown by us, are the "Catholic Church."

I have found this explanation often satisfactory to inquiring minds. And it has been frequently acknowledged to me that it resolved what had long been a considerable difficulty. But there is a great variety of minds, and very often I have met with opponents whom nothing could satisfy. And who, studying Milner's "End of Controversy" much more than the Holy Scriptures, go on to argue that the members of the Church of Rome are always *called* Catholics, and their church is always *called* the Catholic Church even by Protestants themselves; and that as we traverse our streets, this designation is so well and universally known that all who ask for the "Catholic" church would at once be directed to the Roman church.

The answer I have usually made to this is, that there is some truth in this, but all that is true in it has arisen out of our unwillingness to quarrel about words or names. We feel that they are not Catholics, and ought not to be called Catholics; but if we call them Romanists, as belonging to the Church of Rome, they take offense and are angry with us. If we call them Papists, as followers of the papacy, they again take offense and are still more angry with us. And thus, from our kindly and Christian unwillingness to give offense, we prefer calling them by a name, which yet we feel to be inappropriate, inaccurate, and objectionable. We call them *Catholics*, simply to avoid giving them offense, and then they take advantage of this and argue that we recognize them as Catholics! This is but a poor return for our kindness and unwillingness to offend them.

I have found this frequently an adequate answer to persons

who have any generosity of sentiment, and who are not arguing merely as partisans, prepared to deny every thing and to assert any thing. But, simple as the answer is, it is surprising how many are influenced by the argument.

But how explain the fact—it forms an important argument in the pages of Milner—that as we traverse our streets and ask for *the Catholic church*, we are sure to be directed by every one to *the Roman church* ?

I have been surprised at times at the confidence with which some—indeed many persons—have argued thus. And I have answered it by a parallel, saying : If any man, traversing our streets or wandering in the fields, ask for *the church*, he will be sure to be directed to the Protestant church of the parish. This would be invariably the same. And thus I have argued, that if on asking for the Catholic church, one is directed to the Roman church, and this is to be held a proof that the Church of Rome is Catholic ; then the other fact, namely, that if, on inquiring for the church, one is always directed to the Protestant church, it must as fairly be deemed a proof that the Church of England is the Church of Christ. The truth is, that such a process of reasoning on either side is trifling.

The argument, however, that more than all else has been urged upon me is, that the Church of Rome was universal, as the word “ Catholic ” implies—that she was universal through all past centuries and all present centuries, and is thus the Catholic or universal church.

The answer I gave to this is as follows :

The Church of Rome never was universal, and certainly is not now universal ; and every century sees her shorn of some of her provinces, so as that she is steadily and constantly losing her relative position. If ever, at any period of history, she had been universal, it is a certain fact that she is now less able to claim that epithet than at any former epoch. In the first place, she does not keep pace with the steady growth of population ; inasmuch as the population of the old countries where she prevailed, as Italy, Spain, France, Austria, has not increased in the same proportion as those countries wherein

Protestantism prevails, as in Prussia, England, and America. In the next place, the stream of emigration, at this moment extending population over the world, is mainly bearing on its surface the Anglo-Saxon institutions, principles, and religion, which will thus be broad-cast over the whole of the new world. America, India, Australia are illustrations of this.

But we can say even more than this. Assuming her own statement as a basis of argument, namely, that the Church of Rome *was* universal; she must acknowledge and does acknowledge two great defalcations—two gigantic secessions from her pale—two bodies of such vast magnitude as that the total of such seceders or separatists is more numerous than all that have remained to her; so that assuming that she once *was* universal, as she asserts, she can *now* make no claim whatever to that title. The two great sections of the Christian family to which I here refer, are the Greek or Eastern Churches, and the Protestant or Western Churches. Russia, Turkey, Greece, and all Asia have rejected her claims and denied her authority; Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Holland, one half of Germany, with England and North America, have all rejected her authority.

The Church of Rome pronounces the former to be a schismatic separation; and the latter to be a heretical secession. The former, at whatever date it may be supposed to have commenced, was certainly consummated in the fifteenth century: while the latter commenced in the sixteenth century, and is still extending its influence. All this is her own statement, and assuming all this to be true, the Church of Rome can no longer be regarded as universal. The total number of professing Christians in the world is, as accurately as can be estimated, 305,000,000. By the Eastern separation she has lost *seventy-seven millions* of souls, that being the estimated numbers of the Greek or Eastern Churches at the present day. By the Western secession she has lost *ninety-five millions* of souls, for such is the estimated number of the Protestants of Europe and America at present. By these two therefore combined, she has lost *one hundred and seventy-two millions* of

Christians, while she retains all over the world only *one hundred and thirty-three millions* within her pale. Even in the old countries of Europe, according to her own calculations, she is now in a very decided minority. By the last census taken in the several states of Europe, the whole population in 1851 was 256,041,920; and according to the last statement published, in behalf of the Church of Rome (published by Battersby, in 1851), she claims of these only 124,993,961, that is, less than one half! This is her own claim. It ought to have been only 117,000,000 on an accurate calculation. And thus, although as a single communion, she has a larger number of members than any other Church—yet, taking the wide field of Christendom as a whole—taking the professing family and visible church of Christ as a whole—she is, at this moment, in a very decided minority. And the progress of events give significant augury that ere long, she shall have still less pretensions even to this fiction of a name, for every year she becomes still less “universal” or “Catholic.” The wave is breaking upon her old embankments, and one by one they are shaken, sink down, and are engulfed and carried away forever.

It is easy to imagine this claim in mediæval times, when the Church of Rome was in the fullness of her meridian splendor and power; there was then no other church in Europe that could resist her effectually. And yet in England, and in France, and in Spain, the struggle was maintained with a wonderful perseverance, and though stricken down, its cries stifled and its freedom chained, yet every now and then it shook off its oppressor—bravely struggled on for a little while, and then again sunk into the silence of its prison-house. Throughout those ages, the Church of Rome could lift her head like the palm-tree, and boast herself that she stood alone in the world, not indeed the loving mother, but the powerful mistress of the other churches. But all this has passed away. In the East, and in the West, the national and particular churches of Christendom have at last risen in their strength and fulfilled their resurrection, and shivered to atoms the

chains of their bondage, and rent the walls of their prison-house, so that now they are more numerous than their former oppressor. And, not content with their own emancipation, the Protestant churches are spoiling her of her prey, and the hundreds of converts in beautiful Italy, the thousands of down stricken Ireland, and the millions of free-hearted America, are given to the faithful, and loving, and true-hearted labors and prayers of the Protestant Churches. The universality or Catholicity of the Church of Rome is day by day becoming "fine by degrees and elegantly less," and is destined ere long to live only in the memories of the past.

APOSTOLICITY OF THE CHURCH.

The Claim of the Church of Rome as Apostolical—Meaning of the Term—Founded by an Apostle or in Apostolic Times—Uselessness of this—The Fate of many such Churches—Conformity with the Teaching of Apostles—How this is Ascertainable—The Holy Scriptures—The Apostolical Succession—Claimed alike by all Churches—Succession in the Presbytery or in the Episcopacy.

Among my Roman Catholic parishioners was a man, advanced in life, who had married a Protestant much younger than himself. They lived very happily together, and had several children. As was very usual in such cases of mixed marriages, all the children were baptized by the Roman Catholic priest; but after my speaking to them on the subject, they were all sent as scholars to my school, and as attendants at my church.

I have always observed in the case of such mixed marriages that the children are professed as Roman Catholics, or as Protestants, according to the character of the Protestant clergyman of the parish. If he is careless, indifferent, inattentive then the natural feeling of the Roman Catholic parent, combined with the silent influence of the masses of the neighboring population, at once consigns the children to the Church of Rome. There is no opposing influence to counteract this, unless the Protestant clergyman influences the Protestant parent. On the other hand, if the Protestant clergyman is a good, and zealous, and attentive man—if he visits his people and enters into conversation on their little family affairs, and shows an interest in their well-being, both for time and for eternity, he will obtain an influence over the Roman Catholic parent,

through his interest taken in the children, as well as give a moral support to the wishes of the Protestant parent. In such cases the children will be freely given to him by both parents. I have had large experience in this matter, and never knew an instance in which I did not secure the children of mixed marriages, as pupils in the Protestant school, and attendants at the Protestant church. If there be a want of success in this matter, it is generally the fault of the clergyman himself.

I have said that the wife of this Roman Catholic parishioner was a Protestant. She was such by birth and education; but, as her husband usually attended the Roman Catholic service, she remained at home to mind the house and take charge of the children. Her inability thus to attend church was manifest, and although on my speaking to her husband on the subject, he, as a sensible and reasonable man, was willing to do any thing that I could suggest with reason, yet the care of the little children placed a great obstacle in the way. I therefore said to him one day, that as his wife could not come to the church, so the church must come to his wife. I said I would come and pray, and read, and preach at his house. He most readily accepted my offer, and thus I was enabled to establish a cottage lecture on a small scale in his house, where several neighboring families, both Protestants and Romanists, regularly attended.

One thing naturally led to another. The reading of the Scriptures, and my expositions of them, always extemporaneous as to the manner of delivery, and always directed to the great truths of the gospel, and to the necessity of a real and practical religiousness of life, led to many questions and answers, not only on matters of great Christian moment in general, but also on points more or less controverted between the churches. These questions came from Romanists and Protestants alike. The man himself after some time seemed much drawn to the gospel, and sought private conversation with me. He showed a great depth of feeling at times. He was evidently thinking of leaving the Church of Rome. He saw that many

others had openly done so, and he seemed not indisposed to follow their example.

One day we conversed for a long time on the subject of the true Church. Among other points he spoke much about the apostolicity of the Church of Rome—that she was apostolical.

I therefore asked him what he meant by the word, and what argument he drew from it?

He said that when he called the Church of Rome an apostolical church, he meant that she was as old as the apostles—that she was founded in the days of the apostles—that she had received the gospel from the mouths of the apostles—and thus, having been founded by the blessed apostle Peter, the first bishop and pope of Rome, she must be an apostolical church.

I asked him what argument he meant to found on this? I said that I was, in some measure, not disposed to deny it; but wished to know what he intended to found on it!

He said it proved the Church of Rome to be old—an old church—the oldest of all churches.

I then told him that if his argument was that the Church of Rome was an old church, I would at once admit it, for it was a very certain truth; and that as founded by an apostle and in the days of the apostles, she may most truly be called an apostolical church. I told him that—

In this sense we see no objection whatever to call the Church of Rome an apostolic church—she was founded in the days of the apostles, and probably by some of the apostles themselves. We may perhaps not believe what she says about her being founded by Peter, and that he was her first bishop or pope, but we freely admit her to have been founded in the days of the apostles, for the fact is stated in the Holy Scriptures. But, I added, there are other churches equally apostolical; and, although she may claim this epithet in this sense, yet she can not claim it exclusively. If she is an apostolic church, she is only one among many, which are equally apostolical. We read in the Holy Scriptures of the Church at Jerusalem, of the Church at Antioch, of the churches of

Corinth, of Galatia, Laodicea, Ephesus ; of the Churches of Judea, Samaria, Macedonia, Achaia ; and all these are apostolical churches in this sense, for they are all founded by apostles ; and ancient history records, that the gospel was preached in these islands in apostolic times, and as some historians state, even by the apostle Paul himself, so that we see no exclusive right to this appellation on the part of the Church of Rome. Nor, I continued, can she derive any peculiar advantage from it ; for, as one of the Articles of the Church of England says, "As the Church of Jerusalem, Alexandria and Antioch have erred, so also the Church of Rome hath erred, not only in their living and manner of ceremonies, but also in matters of faith." Here are three of the apostolical churches : that of Jerusalem, founded by all the apostles, is now apostate and Mohammedan ; that of Antioch, founded by Peter, is now apostate and Mohammedan ; that of Alexandria, founded by Mark, is now apostate and Mohammedan. All the seven churches of Asia, all apostolical as they were, are now separated as much as ourselves from the Church of Rome, so that I see not what the Church of Rome can gain by calling herself apostolical in this sense of having been founded by an apostle. It has not secured other apostolical churches from error like that of the Greek churches ; or from apostacy, like that of the Asiatic churches. The Church of Rome acknowledges this herself. I do not know, therefore, what she gains by this argument.

He saw this very clearly, and said, that he felt, and for a long time had felt, that for a church to be old and apostolical was a very good thing, but that it was not every thing ; and that all events it did not keep her from falling. The Church of Jerusalem, where the blessed Saviour himself taught and preached, and where St. Peter himself first preached on the day of Pentecost—was she not the first and oldest and most apostolical of all churches ? And yet—God's holy will be done !—it is now gone—gone ! He uttered this in a very impressive and solemn tone, and then added—It is plain, that the oldest and most apostolical churches may fall. Jerusalem

has fallen, Rome may fall, and why—he asked in a thoughtful way—Why is the church called apostolic in the creed?

I said, in reply to this, that whatever was the meaning and intention of the epithet, it was evident it could not mean or intend merely that a church was founded by an apostle, or in the apostolic times; because, if that was the meaning and intention, then there could be no true and apostolical church, but those which were founded in the very earliest ages. Now America was unknown—undiscovered in the apostolic times, and yet she has now many millions of souls living and dying in the true faith of Jesus Christ, and she has thus a true and apostolic church within her bosom, although not founded by the apostles, or in the apostolic times. The words in the creed must mean something else.

He here broke in, saying, that there could be no doubt on that point, for that the Church of Ireland was not founded in the apostles' times. It was founded, he had read, by the blessed St. Patrick in the fourth century. All the apostles were dead and gone to glory, long before that time; and therefore as you say of the Church of America, neither could the Church of Ireland be apostolical, if that was the meaning of the epithets in the creed.

It was evident my old friend was well-pleased at his own cleverness, in adducing so very apt and appropriate an illustration, as the recent foundation of the Irish Church. And as I saw he fully understood my objection so far, I proceeded to state what seemed to me the true purport of the word in the creed.

I reminded him that there was another and very different meaning for the word—that to say a church was scriptural, meant that its doctrines were in agreement with the Scriptures; or to say that a church was Roman Catholic meant that its doctrines were in accordance with the Roman Catholic Church; and in precisely the same way, when it is said that the church is apostolical, it is meant that its doctrines are in agreement with the doctrines of the apostles.

He seemed fully to receive this, and be satisfied with it.

I continued to say that we were to inquire—and it was the grand subject of enquiry—whether the Roman Churches, or the Protestant Churches, had most claim to be called apostolical in this sense.

This—in order to a fair and candid inquiry—requires us first to determine the way in which such inquiry or examination is to be ascertained. How are we to ascertain—how are we best to test the claims to be in accordance with the apostles?

It is by comparing the doctrine and discipline of the churches, whether Roman or Protestant, with the writings of the apostles. I argued thus: If we wish to ascertain the opinions of Luther and Melancthon and Zwinglius and Calvin, and the continental reformers of the 16th century, our most fair, candid and reasonable course will be, to open their writings, and learn thus from themselves their own opinions. This is infinitely better than to take them at second-hand. Again, if we desire to learn the judgment of Cranmer, and Latimer, and Ridley, and Hooper, and Jewell, and the other Reformers of England of the 16th century, is it not the true and only just and reasonable course to open their writings, and thus learn from themselves, not from second-hand sources, but from themselves, their own opinions. Again, if we want to ascertain the mind of the Nonconformists of the 17th century: of Baxter, and Howe, and Calamy, and Manton; there seems to be no course so just, and fair, and right as going direct to their writings and so learning from themselves, and not at second-hand, the opinions they entertained. On the very same principle, I argued, that if our object be to learn the mind, the opinion, the doctrine and discipline of the apostles, with the view to ascertain whether or not the doctrines and discipline of the church be in accordance with them—if our object be to ascertain whether the Church of Rome, or the Church of England—be apostolical, in this sense of the word, then we must, if we would be fair, and just, and reasonable, come to the writings of the apostles, and thus bring all to the test of the New Testament Scriptures.

He remarked that that would bring it, in the end, to the Protestant principle of trying every thing by the Holy Scriptures; and he added thoughtfully, that he was sure it was after all the right way. He paused, and after a few moments said, that he had read somewhere that the word "apostolical" sometimes meant the succession of the clergy of the church regularly and without break, like the links of a chain so to speak, from the apostles to the present time; that is, that every single clergyman was ordained by the laying-on of the hands of those who were previously ordained in the same way, and whose ordainers were themselves previously ordained in the same way by the laying on of hands. And that thus they could trace every one of the clergy regularly to the times of the apostles. He added, that among the priests of the Church of Rome, he had often heard this explanation—that he did not himself think much of it—but wished to know my opinion. His own opinion, he at once avowed, was, that every church should be tried by the Word of God—by the Holy Scriptures.

To this I replied, that I fully agreed with him, that after all, the only safe and certain test or standard of truth was the Holy Scriptures; and that the more they were read in faith, and prayer, and humility, the more men would be led to make them the only test or standard. This was the invariable result with those who knew and loved them.

He again asked me, what I thought of the succession from the apostles.

I answered this by saying that every church in Christendom had this sort of succession from the apostles. In the Church of Rome, in the Churches of Greece, in the Protestant Churches, they all claim the same succession, that is, all their clergy are ordained by clergy who were themselves ordained before them; and they ordained again by others before them, and so on to the times of the apostles.

He stated that he had heard this before, especially of the Protestant Churches of England and Ireland. At the Reformation, the archbishops, and bishops, and priests, changed

their doctrines, they were not changed themselves, that is, they were not turned out, and unordained men put in their places. He had heard that the mass-book was turned out, and the common-prayer book was brought in, but that the clergy were not changed. They gave up Romanism, and they took up Protestantism. They changed their religion, but were not changed themselves. They did not resign their parishes.

I stated, that such was the true view of the facts, for that Cranmer, and Latimer, and Ridley, and Hooper, and the rest of them, were all archbishops, and bishops, and priests, belonged to the Church of Rome, that is, held communion with her. And if they had the succession of orders from the apostles, before their conversion, they must have had it after their conversion.

He then asked, whether the same was true of the Presbyterian ministers of the Church of Scotland, and of the Dissenters of England and Ireland. Had they this succession?

Most certainly, was my reply. In the former country—Scotland—the Romish priests became Protestant ministers; so that these Protestant ministers had this apostolic succession as much after conversion as before; and to this day they never recognize any man as an ordained minister, unless he has been ordained by others who were themselves ordained ministers before them. And so too with the Dissenters or Nonconformists. Whenever any one of them is to be ordained, there is a meeting of the congregation, and some older ministers attend; and with prayer, those senior ministers, who were themselves so ordained before, lay hands, after the apostles' example, upon the young candidate, and thus set him apart for the sacred office of the ministry. They thus receive the outward ordination to the ministry from those who were ministers before them, and so on in successive generations to the time of the Reformation, and so on to the age of the apostles. And thus this apostolical succession, of which the Church of Rome boasts so much, belongs to all the other churches likewise—is as much the privilege of all our Episco-

palian and Presbyterian—of all our conforming and nonconforming churches, as of the Church of Rome.

He seemed very much struck with this view of the subject. It was new to him ; and he said, that after all that men might say on the subject, it seemed to him that they must in the end come to the Holy Scriptures. He said that this kind of apostolicity could not serve the Church of Rome. If she did not give it up, he could not help it, for he felt he must give it up forever.

I then took occasion to tell him, that the advocates of the Church of Rome were perfectly well aware of all this ; and that all the Protestant churches possessed this kind of apostolical succession as well as herself. And therefore, she has invented another kind of succession : she says that apostolical succession does not mean the regular succession of clergy in general, but only the regular succession of bishops.

And what arguments, he asked warmly, have they for *that* ? At all events, you have bishops and a succession of bishops in the Church of England, but what proof have they for saying it is only a succession of bishops ? It is not with the bishops that we, the people, have to do ; it is with the priests that we are concerned. Have they any thing in the Holy Scriptures about succession of bishops any more than about succession of priests ? There was a dash of indignant feeling in his tone.

I said that I never knew or heard any reason for this distinction. St. Paul speaks of Timothy as having been ordained "by the laying on of hands of the Presbytery," as well as his own. And that I believed that the true succession is in the Presbytery at large, and not in the Episcopacy alone. I then told him, that in the Church of England the ordination is conferred not by the bishop alone, but by him and by the Presbytery, that is, by the clergy present, who all, along with the bishop, lay their hands alike on the head of the candidate. The Church of England does not acknowledge the distinction, and she thus shows that she holds that the true apostolical succession is not in the bishops alone, but in the bishops and presbyters together.

He thanked me warmly for this, and showed that some little difficulties had been removed from his mind. He seemed more at his ease, as if he breathed more freely. He said that every thing went to show there was no sure or certain way of proving the true church but by the Holy Scriptures. That was the only true apostolicity.

I took the opportunity of pressing this upon him. I also took a short review of our argument, reminding him it arose on the meaning of the words "Apostolical Church" in the creed;—that it could not mean a church founded by apostles or in apostolic times, for that many other churches, as that of Jerusalem, founded by our Lord himself, and blessed with the presence, the miracles, the teaching, of St. Peter, and all the apostles, had fallen into apostasy and Mohammedanism;—that it could not mean a succession in the ministry from apostolic days, for that belonged to every church, and was therefore not an exclusive mark of any—and that finally, it could only mean a church which held, believed, and loved, and practiced the doctrines and discipline of the apostles, as set forth in their own writings and sermons in the Holy Scriptures.

We soon parted. I felt thankful that his manner showed a greater approximation to my opinions than on any former conversation.

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION.

Confession of Sin to God—The Romish Form of Confession—Scripture Texts on Confession—The Difference between the two Churches—Confession only commanded to God—Mutual Confession—Priestly Absolution proved Useless by a Dilemma—The Absolving and Forgiving Power involved in the Words of our Lord—Matt. xviii. 18; John xx. 23—This Power belongs to all Believers alike—The Power of Forgiveness defined—Explanation of the Allusion to the Levitical Law in the Words of our Lord—Objection to the Romish Doctrine as Inconsistent with Divine Justice—With Social Morality—Note, on the Form of Absolution in the Church of England.

I WAS speaking one day, in the cottage of one of my people, on the duty of confessing our sins to God. There were several present, and among them three or four members of the Church of Rome. I had no thought of them particularly while speaking on the subject, my object was to show that if we are deeply impressed with a sense of our sinfulness, we shall be very lowly and humble, and shall think very lowly and humbly of ourselves; and at times hate and loathe ourselves, at the memory of our sins;—that then the Christian will go before his God and Saviour, and confess his sinfulness and ask for pardon from him against whom he has sinned, and who alone can forgive. While enlarging on this, I pressed on my hearers that humiliation and repentance were inseparable from a real Christianity; and that a confession of sin to God was inseparable from these. I referred to the beautiful and touching confession in the Prophet Daniel, ix. 3-19, as an illustration of what such a humiliation and confession ought to be. And I pressed also on them, that there was a comfort and a blessedness, and a sweet peace for the heart, when the man thus pours out his whole soul unreservedly before his God, unburdening and unboasting himself to Him "whose

eyes are over the righteous, and whose ears are open to their prayers ;" thus seeking the sympathy and looking for the forgiveness of his God. There is an inexpressible happiness in thus pouring out one's soul before Him, in the confession of sin, and in the prayer for forgiveness, and then experiencing the peace and joy that, in answer to prayer, is breathed into the soul of the believer ; it steals into the heart like dew upon the tender grass, and there is peace and happiness more beautiful in the spiritual eye than even the sparkling and brilliancy of the dew upon the herb. The heart rejoices, and sees beauty, and love, and happiness in every thing.

After I had thus expressed myself, without any allusion to any particular church, one of the Roman Catholics present said, that they were in the habit of making this confession to the priest and receiving his absolution. And that they experienced thus the peace and happiness of having their sins forgiven.

This led to a short conversation on the form called "The Confiteor," which he repeated, as usually said at the confessional. It runs thus : "I confess to Almighty God, to the blessed Mary, ever Virgin, to blessed Michael the Archangel, to blessed John Baptist, to the holy Apostles Peter and Paul, to all the saints, and to you, father, that I have sinned exceedingly, in thought, word, and deed, through my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault. [The person then specifies his several sins in their details, and concludes]—therefore, I beseech the blessed Mary ever Virgin, the blessed Michael the Archangel, blessed John Baptist, the holy Apostles Peter and Paul, and all the saints, and you, father, to pray to our Lord God for me." He added, that when the confession was made in this form, it was said to be under the seal of confession, and must not be disclosed by the priest ; but that if made without this form, the priest was not bound to keep it secret ; and therefore every one learned this form so as to secure the secrecy of his confession ; so that a Roman Catholic had not only the advantage of having his sins forgiven, but also of having them kept secret forever.

I said, that there was something else in that form of still more importance. It contained a confession of sin to God and to the saints alike, as if there was no difference between them, and as if the sin was as much against one as the other ! And then there is a prayer to the saints—not to God, but *only* to the saints, to pray to God for the penitent ! But still more than all, I added, there is no prayer to God, neither to the Father, the Son, or the Holy Spirit—there is no mention of the blessed name of Jesus Christ, through whom alone we can have forgiveness ; and there is no allusion to the Holy Spirit, through whom alone we can be made holy ; and no cry to him for repentance, no prayer for forgiveness, no desire for sanctification ! There is the absence of all that is distinctive of true Christianity. I added, that all this omission seems designed to draw away the minds of the people from Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit, in order to lead them to think only of the priest, and to confess only to him, and to look only to him for forgiveness. It seemed to do this effectually ; but alas, it leads them to forget Christ.

This remark was felt—deeply felt by some present ; and it led to some very serious conversation. But we soon separated, not however, till it was arranged that on an appointed evening they should come again with some other of their friends to speak more fully on the subject.

In the course of some few days we met again ; our party might now consist of some sixteen or eighteen persons, of whom the larger portion were members of the Church of Rome.

The conversation commenced, by one of them asking me, why the Protestants did not practice confession. He said that every man was a sinner, and therefore had sins to confess—that he thereby received forgiveness and consolation—that the Church of Rome had therefore ordained that every one should confess his sins, at least once a year ; that she did this in accordance with the Holy Scriptures, which expressly commanded the practice of confession, as where it is said, “Confess your sins one to another”—James v. 16. And as was practiced in

the presence of John the Baptist, as we read, "They were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins."—Matt. iii. 6. And again, before St. Paul, as we read, "Many that believed, came, and confessed, and showed their deeds."—Acts xix. 18. There was confession in the Holy Scriptures, and yet Protestants never practice it.

I stated that he was altogether under a mistake in supposing that Protestants do not confess; for myself I said, that I would not for all this world could give, forego the privilege of confessing my sins—that day by day, and night by night, publicly and privately it was my practice—that I believed and knew it was the practice of every religious Protestant; and that no truly pious person would omit it. But—for I saw the surprise experienced by many at the statement—I added, there was no difference whatever, between the two churches, as to the duty of confession, the difference was as to the person to whom the confession was to be made; Romanists confessing to THE PRIEST while Protestants confess to God. *There* is the true difference between us.

I perceived that this was fully recognized, and being unwilling that our conversation should be merely controversial, I went on to say, that the Christian ever found a comfort, and a blessedness, and a peace in coming to his God, and in deep humiliation and sincere penitence, confessing his sins, and praying for mercy, pardon and grace. It was only the man who had tried and experienced it, could believe the blessed comfort, and the inward peace that he enjoyed, who could retire to his inmost chamber, and there, where there was no eye to see his tears, but His who seeth in secret, and no ear to hear his words, but His whose ears are open to the prayers of his people—there unbosoming himself, unburdening his aching, bursting heart, pouring out as it were, his whole soul, with all its sin, and sorrow, and shame, and there watching and waiting till, so to speak, he feels the blood-drops of the crucified Saviour fall upon the prostrate penitent, and touch his soul. It seems to come soft as the dew of heaven, to soothe and refresh his crushed and bruised spirits. It is only such a man

that really knows the comfort and blessedness of confession to his God, and he who does know it, will never forego such a well-spring and fountain of peace, for all the happiness the world can give.

All this was fully assented to, and there were some who seemed to feel as if it was true; but it was remarked that while a man ought to confess his sins to his God, he ought also to confess them to his priest, who was authorized by the Almighty to hear the confession and to give the absolution, so that the question was again asked—why the Protestants did not practice confession to THE PRIEST?

I answered this inquiry by saying as before, that the precise difference between the churches, was, that one made confession to God, and the other to the PRIEST—that the clear and express language of the Holy Scripture always enjoined the former, and supplied no instance of the latter. To substantiate this statement, I referred to the following texts:

“And Joshua said unto Achan, My son, give, I pray thee, glory to the Lord God of Israel, and make confession unto him; and tell me now what thou hast done; hide it not from me.”—Joshua vii. 19.

“And Hezekiah spake comfortably unto all the Levites that taught the good knowledge of the Lord: and they did eat throughout the feast seven days, offering peace-offerings, and making confessions to the Lord God of their fathers.”—2 Chron. xxx. 22.

“And Ezra the priest stood up, and said unto them, Ye have transgressed, and have taken strange wives, to increase the trespass of Israel. Now therefore make confession unto the Lord God of your fathers, and do his pleasure.”—Ezra x. 10, 11.

“I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin.”—Psalm xxxii. 5.

“And I prayed unto the Lord my God, and made my confession, and said, O Lord, the great and dreadful God, keeping

the covenant and mercy to them that love him, and to them that keep his commandments."—Dan. ix. 4.

"If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."—1 John i. 8, 9.

In each of these places, we have either a command to make our confession to God, or an encouragement to do so, or an example of it. They are plain and clear texts, which every one can understand. And they are thus an illustration of the Protestant practice, of confessing only to God. They are also a justification of our practice, while at the same time, there is not a single command in the Holy Scriptures to justify confession to a PRIEST, nor a single example to illustrate it. *Auricular Confession*, that is, a private and secret confession to the alone ear of a PRIEST, is a thing unknown in the Holy Scriptures.

Many eyes were now directed to our friend, who had asked the question, and they seemed to feel that my arguments required an answer. There was a pause of some moments, and it would have continued, if it had not been broken by one of those whose love of the ludicrous, so common, and indeed national, could not restrain itself. With an arch eye, and a look intensely droll, he suggested to him in half a whisper, the example of Judas, who, having betrayed his Saviour, returned to the priests, and confessed it! The drollery of making Judas the example to be followed, acted like magic on a second of the party present, who suggested in the same undertone, that Judas knew his duty well, for he brought the money to the priest, when he made his confession!

These sallies, however unfitting the subject, are irrepressible among the Irish, even upon the most solemn subject. So appearing not to hear what had passed, I remarked that the places usually cited by Roman Catholics in favor of confession to the priest, had no reference whatever to it. The text, "Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another," only taught a *mutual* confession;—that where we have sinned

against God or against our fellows, we should not secretly or proudly conceal it, or deny it, but *mutually* confess it ;—we should frankly and openly as Christian brethren, confess it one to another. It is not that we are to confess our faults to the priest *alone*, but “one to another ;” so that if *we* confess to the priests, *they* should confess to us in return. The simple words of the text, show that it is a mutual confession, and not a confession to the priest alone. It is a brotherly confession, and has nothing sacerdotal in it. If, I added, these words prove that any among you should confess to the priest, they also prove that the priest should confess to you in return. The words are, “Confess your faults one to another.” They command two things—confession and prayer, and both are desired to be mutual. It is neither prayer for the priest alone, nor confession to the priest alone. It is mutual prayer and mutual confession.

This answer was sufficient, and the general feeling exhibited among all present, was that of satisfaction at the answer, so far as this particular text is concerned. Instead of caviling or questioning, they acknowledged that I had given the fair meaning of the words. And one remarked with the general approval, or at least assent of the others, that the words “pray one for another,” did not mean “pray for the priest alone ;” but that we were to pray for the priest, and the priest was to pray for us. It was mutual prayer—prayer for one another. And in the same way, he added, “Confess your sins one to another,” must mean that both priest and layman are to confess or acknowledge one to another their many sins.*

* The other two texts are seldom much dwelt on, by candid Roman Catholics ; indeed they present no real difficulty. The place in Matt. iii. 6, simply states that the parties came openly and publicly to John the Baptist, and that he baptized them openly and publicly ; and when they are said to confess their sins, it was evidently as openly and publicly as their coming to him and being baptized by him. It could not, at least, be a sacerdotal confession, inasmuch as the Baptist was neither a *Jewish Priest* nor a *Christian Priest*. And the same remark explains the place in Acts xix. 18. It was the open and public

But while the question thus far seemed inclining in my favor, I felt that the great struggle upon which my opponents relied, was still in reserve—that we had been thus far only skirmishing as with small arms, while the heavy artillery on which they most depended was still to come into action. And I therefore prepared myself for what was at hand—namely, the argument for auricular confession derived from the power of absolution. My expectation was deferred for a few moments, as one of the party urged the following argument :

It is found by experience, he said, that the practice of confessing to a priest is good, and although it certainly can not be well proved from Holy Scripture, certainly not from the words in St. James, yet the practice is very good in itself, and prevents many a man from falling into sin. When a man—or woman either—knows he must go to confession—that sooner or later he must tell his sin to his clergy—that though he, perhaps, may be able to hide it from every one else, yet he can not keep it a secret from his priest, he must tell him all shame—when a man knows this, it many times frightens him beforehand, and prevents his committing the sin. The fear of the priest prevents him. Now, he added, that is the way with Roman Catholics : but the Protestants have no such fear of the clergy, because they have no confession.

This objection had often before been pressed upon me, and therefore I was the more prepared with my answer. I stated that the argument was very characteristic of the difference between the two churches. It spoke of the fear of a priest—of the fear of man—of the fear of a fellow-mortal and fellow-sinner. It spoke of men and women being deterred from sin by this fear. But it said nothing of the fear of God, and our Lord has said, “Fear not him that can kill the body—but fear

acknowledgment of their former evil lives and sinful deeds. It was the act of men who were convinced of their sins, and openly and publicly confessed it ; and showed the sincerity of their conversion, by openly and publicly surrendering their bad books, and burning them before all. There is nothing of Auricular Confession—nothing of Sacramental Confession in it.

Him that can cast both body and soul into hell, yea, I say unto you, fear Him." Now while this abstaining from sin merely through fear of man is very characteristic of the Church of Rome, it is far otherwise with Protestants. We feel that however secret our sin—however unknown to the world—however done in our secret chamber—however buried in our own bosom, yet is it known to an all-seeing God, and will yet be made known by Him before an assembled universe. We may do it "in the secret chamber," but He will proclaim it "on the housetop." The mere fear of man is nothing with us, in comparison with this. The difference between us, is, that Romanists abstain from sin *through fear of the priest*, while the Protestant forbears *through fear of God*. The difference is a very wide one, and however painful to contemplate—and however unwilling I might be to express it—yet it has been necessitated by its being made an argument in favor of confession to a priest. Confession to a priest leads to a fear of the priests—confession to God leads to the fear and the love of God.

I do not know what effect this might have had on my hearers, but I had often before observed that the contrast acted favorably for our Protestantism upon minds religiously disposed among the Roman Catholics. And as there was a pause—a momentary silence, I added, that if the argument in favor of confession to a priest, was that the fear of being obliged to reveal all to him, actually deterred from the commission of the sin, then confession to a sheriff or to a magistrate, or to a hangman, if commanded and enforced in the same way, would serve the purpose of frightening from sin, as well as confession to a priest. This I felt was but a poor and miserable motive against sin, it was but a ghastly specter—a superstition to frighten children, or grown persons as weak and mindless as children. There is no restraint upon sin worth the name, except the love of God, impelling us to do all things to please Him; and a reverence of God, that leads us to avoid all that is displeasing in His sight. These are the motives that God himself presents to his intelligent creatures,

and a mere fear of man is unworthy of us, either as men or as Christians.

It was immediately stated that besides the fear of being obliged to reveal all the sin with its shame, and its aggravations, there was another feeling. It was the wish for forgiveness, that more than every thing else led to confession. The priest had authority from the Great God to give absolution of sin, and so long as he had that power the poor sinner would come to him and seek absolution. And this, of course he can not have, unless he has first made a full confession of all his sins. He must confess his sins. He must repent of them. And then the priest can forgive him.

I took up his words "he must repent of them," and repeated them slowly, so as to fix the attention of all, and then asked, whether this repentance was necessary in order to absolution—whether this repentance was necessary in order that the absolution of the priest might be effectual.

It was of course necessary, was the reply, for there can be no forgiveness without repentance.

Is then, I asked, this repentance so necessary that the absolution is null and void without it?

Assuredly so, it was answered: If the man does not repent, the priest can not forgive, his absolution is worthless.

Then, I answered, the uselessness of the system of the Church of Rome is sufficiently evident, for you acknowledge that if the man, who confesses to the priest, has *not* repented of his sins, he is not forgiven, and can not be forgiven by the priest, no matter whether the priest pronounces the absolution or not. If the man has *not* repented, the priest has no power or authority to forgive. His absolution is null and void! Now, I added, there is another case to consider—if the man *has* repented of his sins, he does not want the forgiveness of the priest, *because he has already received the forgiveness of Jesus Christ!* I then laid down broadly what I knew would be fully and freely admitted, that the promise of forgiveness of sins was made by Jesus Christ to all who repented—that the Apostle Peter said, "Repent and be con-

verted, that your sins may be blotted out.”—Acts, iii. 19. When a man has repented of his sins, he forthwith has the forgiveness of Jesus Christ: and having this, he has no need of the forgiveness of the priest.

There could be no doubt or mistake as to the effect which this mode of treating the question, had upon the minds of those present. It was unmistakable: indeed I have never known the argument pressed on the minds of the Roman Catholics, without considerable effect following. They invariably feel it, and although, unhappily, they sometimes regard it as a mere perplexing difficulty, which they can not answer or overcome, yet they always feel its power, and not unfrequently it has detached them altogether from the notion of a sacerdotal forgiveness of sins. On the present occasion, my object was to force it on their consideration, and I asked:—

Is it not true—is it not the doctrine of the Church of Rome herself, that if the man has *not* repented, the priest can not forgive him, and his absolution is consequently useless?

It is certainly true, was the reply frankly given.

Is it not also true, I continued—is it not also the doctrine of the Church of Rome, that if the man *has* repented of his sins, Jesus Christ has forgiven them?—so that he has thus the forgiveness of Jesus Christ already, and does not want the forgiveness of the priest. It is useless.

To this there was no reply, so that I asked—whether I was clearly understood.

The answer given was clear and decisive. It was to the effect that my argument was that the absolution of the priest was useless—that if the man repented not, the pardon of the priest was useless, as it could do nothing; and that if the man had indeed repented, the pardon of the priest was also useless, because the man had already the pardon of Jesus Christ;—that in either case the pardon of the clergy was useless.

I said quietly that my argument was rightly understood, and I asked for an answer. It was frankly said in return, that they could not answer it.

For some moments more the conversation continued on this point, and then turned to another subject altogether. It was the most difficult and important of all.

It was this—that our Lord Jesus Christ gave to His apostles the power of forgiving or retaining sins—that these apostles were succeeded in this power by the bishops, as their successors in the Church—that these bishops impart or delegate this power to the priests of the Church—that as the priests receive thus the power to forgive or retain sins, it is necessary that all persons should confess such sins to the priests before they can impart the forgiveness, as they can not forgive the sins till they know them. And all this was founded on—“Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.”—Matt. xviii. 18. And—“Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained.”—John, xx. 23.

My answer to this was at some length. I can not undertake to give more than an abstract of it. It may startle many. It may be new to more. But believing most sacredly that it is the true solution of this difficult question, I may feel fear and trembling as to my power of developing my views, but I have the most unbounded confidence in their truth.

The first question—and a most natural one it is—is as to the persons to whom these words were spoken.

Were they addressed *to the apostles alone*, either as Christians, specially favored; or, as men representing their successors in the episcopacy or in the priesthood or in the ministry of the Church?

Or—Were they addressed to the apostles *and others*—not to the apostles *alone* but *with others*, apostles and other lay disciples, not as representing the clergy alone, but as representing *both the clergy and laity*, in short, the whole Church or body of His believing people?

It is apparent that the whole inquiry as to the power of binding and loosing, of forgiving or retaining sin, depends on the solution of this question: for if the words of our Lord

were addressed *to the apostles alone*, as representing the ministry of the Church, then there is some ground for confining this power, whatever it be, to the ministry. But if, on the other hand, our Lord addressed these words to *lay disciples*, as well as to the twelve apostles, then it will be clear that this power belongs to the whole body of the Church—as much to *the laity* as to *the priesthood*.

This consideration greatly narrows our inquiry, and lessens the difficulty, as it avoids all the mists and clouds which the dust of human learning has gathered and thickened around the subject to obscure and darken it.

Our first inquiry therefore is, as to the persons to whom the words in Matt. xviii. 18, are addressed.

The chapter opens with the statement that while our Lord was speaking to Peter and others on the subject of miracles and paying tribute, other disciples came to him. “At the same time came *the disciples* unto Jesus, saying, Who is greatest in the kingdom of heaven? And Jesus called a *little child* unto him, and set him in the midst, and said,” etc. These words plainly imply that there were other persons beside the twelve apostles present. Indeed, in reference to some others, his weak disciples present, he says, at verse 10, “Take heed that ye despise not one of *these* little ones;” and again, at verse 14—“It is not the will of your Father that one of *these* little ones should perish.” This language implies, that besides the apostles there were others present, who were as children in the knowledge of Christ. And beside this consideration, it is to be observed that the word is not “Apostles,” but “Disciples.” [And although these words are sometimes convertible terms, yet they certainly are not always nor generally so. In John, xxi. 1, there are some named as disciples, as Nathanael of Galilee, who were not apostles. And in Acts i. 15, the disciples are said to have been one hundred and twenty in number, and among the number were women, upon whom, as the “daughters” and “handmaids” of the Lord, the Spirit descended, as well as on the twelve apostles, Acts, ii. 17.] And thus it is to the disciples, in the extended sense,

that the words of our Lord in this chapter are addressed. This is the more apparent when we consider the solemn words on the subject of offences, the offending hand, or foot, or eye—a subject that runs from the sixth to the tenth verses, and that certainly was not designed for the twelve apostles alone, but for all the disciples of Christ. And so too, in all his words, from the eleventh to the fourteenth verses, where he speaks of his sheep that had gone astray, and of himself as the true and loving Shepherd, that sought them and found them, and rejoiced over them. In like manner, all that remarkable discourse, from the fifteenth to the seventeenth verse, in which he teaches every Christian how he is to act in reference to his offending brother. It can not possibly be supposed to mean how the twelve apostles were to act toward each other, but how all loving Christians—all his disciples were to act. And again, when at the nineteenth verse, he promises his presence among any two or three who assemble together in his name, such promise is assuredly designed, not merely for the twelve apostles, but for the encouragement and the comfort of all his faithful people. And then, when from the twenty-first verse to the conclusion of the chapter, our Lord unfolds the forgiving spirit of the Christian, and enforces his precept by reference to his own forgiving love; it is impossible to reflect even for a moment, without the conviction that all is addressed to and designed for his disciples generally, and not merely for the twelve apostles alone.

This being the character of the whole chapter in all its details, it is altogether inconsistent with all right canons of interpretation, to select one verse out of the thirty-five—to select one verse, the eighteenth, and assert that it is addressed, not to the disciples generally, but to the twelve apostles alone. From the fifteenth verse to the end of the chapter, our Lord is speaking of the offenses and trespasses of Christians against one another, and their duty to forgive one another. And it is in the midst of this he utters the remarkable words—“Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be

loosed in heaven,"—words addressed not to the twelve apostles alone, but to his disciples in general. All right reasoning and all just exposition alike demand that these words be regarded as conveying no peculiar or exclusive power to the clergy alone, but that only which belongs in common to all the people of Christ.

This consideration at once removes these words, Matt. xviii. 18, from the category of those supposed to confer *exclusively* on the priesthood the power of absolution or forgiveness. They confer the same power upon the laity. It is not a sacerdotal but a Christian forgiveness. And addressed, as they are, to all the people of Christ, they convey the promise, that if we, acting in the loving and forgiving spirit of Christ, shall forgive any who sin against us, that forgiveness shall assuredly be ratified in heaven. If we forgive, He also will forgive. And this is our grand encouragement to forgive; for that forgiveness will be ratified above.

The same process of reasoning leads to the same results in reference to the other place where these remarkable words occur, in John, xx. 23.

The inquiry here is—whether these words were addressed to the Apostles *alone*, and through them to the priesthood of the Church—or, whether they were addressed to the apostles *with other disciples*, and so to the whole body of the faithful in Christ.

This inquiry finds its solution by reference to the parallel narrative of the same transaction in the Gospel of St. Luke, chapter xxiv.

It appears from the first verse that our Lord arose on the first day of the week. "Now upon the first day of the week, very early in the morning." It also appears from the next verse, that those who first visited the sepulcher came, and, as is said at verse 9, "told all these things unto the eleven AND TO ALL THE REST." [Note, that these words imply the assembling of some others with the apostles.] It next appears, from the thirteenth verse, that it was this same day that our Lord met the two disciples at Emmaus—"two of them went that

same day to a village called Emmaus." Of these, one at least, whose name was Cleopas, verse 18, was *not* an apostle. And these the very same day, as the evening drew on, returned to the eleven apostles at Jerusalem. This is stated at verse 33—"They rose up *the same hour* and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven gathered together, **AND THEM THAT WERE WITH THEM**, saying, The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared unto Simon. And as they thus spake, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, and said, Peace be unto you—behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself; handle me and see."

From this it is evident, that on that solemn occasion when our Lord appeared among his disciples, on the very evening of the day of his resurrection, when he spoke the blessed words, "Peace be unto you;" and when he showed them his hands and his feet in proof of his identity, and that he was not merely a spirit—that on that solemn occasion there were present not only the apostles, but also the disciples of Emmaus, and others besides. The expression is decisive—"They found the eleven gathered together, **AND THEM THAT WERE WITH THEM**,"—an expression very similar to that of verse 9, "to the eleven, and to **ALL THE REST**." So that there can be no doubt of there being present on that occasion several Christians, who were not of the number of the apostles, probably a large number, possibly the 120 we read of in Acts, i. 15. Now there is nothing in sacred history more certain than that it was on this very occasion, and *to this mixed assembly*, that our Lord addressed the remarkable words—"Whosoever sins ye forgive, they are forgiven, and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained." Thereby conferring this power, whatever it be, not only on the twelve apostles, as representing the priesthood of the Church, but also on all his other faithful disciples then present; not only to all "the eleven," but to "them that were with them," and "all the rest." This appears, beyond all doubt or question, by reference to the gospel of John, who describes the resurrection as having taken place on the first day of the week; and then

describes the appearing of our Lord in the evening of that same day, verse 19, to his "disciples," using the very words detailed by Luke, "Peace be unto you;" and in the same way showing his hands and feet. "Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. And when he had so said, he showed unto them his hands and his side. Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord. Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost: Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained."—John, xx. 19—23. The conclusion from this is incontestable; namely, that these words were addressed, not exclusively to the twelve apostles, as representing the priesthood of the Church, or as giving to them any peculiar or exclusive power over their fellow-sinners of the laity, but to all other disciples or believers then present; thus conferring upon all, apostles and disciples alike—on clergy and laity alike—the very same power or privilege—whatever it may be—granting it to all alike.

This consideration removes this text, like the former one, from the category of those which are supposed to confer exclusively on the priesthood the power of forgiving and retaining sins. Whatever that power may be, it clearly belongs to the disciples as much as to the apostles—to the LAITY as to the CLERGY.

The argument which I found upon all this is, that seeing the two places wherein these words of our Lord occur, namely, Matt. xviii. 18, and John, xx. 24, describe those words as addressed to the body of the laity as much as to the body of the clergy, in fact to the whole family of disciples or Church of Christ; so they do not confer any peculiar power or exclusive privilege on the clergy as distinct from the laity. The apostles were present, and so may be thought to represent the

clergy. The laity were present, and so may be supposed to represent the laity. And these remarkable words being addressed to all alike, can not, on any right rules of interpretation, be ascribed peculiarly or exclusively to either. They belong to *the whole Church or body of the faithful*.

There is no answer—and there can be no answer—to this, except that which objects that it is impossible, or at least improbable, that the power of absolution or forgiveness should be ceded to the laity—that it is essentially a priestly or clerical function, and can not, from its nature, belong to the body of the faithful.

The reply to this is obvious, at least, it has ever seemed to me to be obvious, and I have, therefore, always given it in answer to this objection. My reply is, that this notion of absolution and forgiveness being a priestly act, and one of which the laity are incapable, is nothing else than a mere prejudice—a prejudice which has no warrant whatever from the Holy Scriptures—a prejudice which has originated in and been sustained by the Church of Rome; and which, in the darkness and superstition and priestcraft of the middle ages, had become infused in all the religious notions and theological books for centuries, and which was not clearly seen as such, and cast out of the Church, at the Reformation. It has thus been mistakenly fostered among us, and has been the cause of weakness, and sadness, and trouble, and perplexity among us, drawing some of our holiest minds in the direction of dissent, and leading some of our most argumentative minds in the direction of Romanism. The ax should be laid at its root, to cut it down as cumbering the ground. The truth should be stated broadly. The power of binding and loosing—the power of absolving and retaining—belongs to the laymen as fully as to the priest. It was ceded by Jesus Christ to all his disciples, to all his faithful ones; in other words, to all his CHURCH, composed, as it is, of clergy and laity. And this power belongs not exclusively to either, but equally to both.

It is here, however, the question occurs as to what may be the real meaning of these remarkable words of our Lord.

and what is the real range and extent of the power they involve.

The answer to this question must necessarily be such an interpretation of the words as will be applicable to the laity as well as to the clergy ; and such a description of a power as belongs to the one as well as to the other.

There seem three kinds of forgiveness.

I. The first is that of a man who forgives, as he has the undoubted right, the offenses or injuries of his fellow man against himself. Every man, whether cleric or lay, possesses this power.

II. The next is where an offense or wrong is done to a body of men, as a congregation or church ; then it is clear that such body can forgive the offense or wrong against itself. And in such case the body may delegate one or more of its number to communicate that forgiveness, or to give that forgiveness in its name. The minister or ministers of the body are very fitting persons to be invested with this delegated authority, and thus may absolve offenders in the name of the whole body of the church ; but it is clear that, in this case, they do it as *the representatives of the laity*, and not as *the delegates of God*. Their power or authority is *from the church* and not from God.

III. There is another way in which a man may be said to forgive ;—namely, when he *declares and pronounces* the forgiveness of another ; as when he proclaims the forgiveness of God to the repentant sinner. It is clear that this can be done by either clergyman or layman. But it is equally clear that the former is authorized and the other not—that the clergyman is especially appointed, charged, commissioned to proclaim the forgiveness in such a way as the layman can not do. The criminal under sentence of death may be pardoned by his gracious sovereign. Any man who has access to the criminal may inform him of this, but the sheriff alone is the official authorized to do so, and therefore it is only his announcement that satisfies the criminal. And so in the proclamation of the gospel ; any man may proclaim it to the sinner. The minister

of God is appointed especially to do so. The former is unauthorized. The latter speaks authoritatively. In either case it is God alone who forgives, and his minister only declares and pronounces it.

This gives us a key to the full understanding of the words of our Lord. They are taken from the forms of the Levitical law. By that law, in reference to leprosy, [and leprosy under the law was a type of sin under the gospel,] there was an authority given to the priest to examine every infected person. And when he found him infected, he had authority to pronounce him unclean, that is, diseased, and immediately had him "shut up" or "bound," that so he might not mingle in the congregation. After a little space the priest was to see him again; and if the leprosy was gone, he was to pronounce him clean, that is, healthy, and so "absolve" or "loose" the man, permitting him again to mingle with the people. This is the allusion in the words of our Lord. He gives the power of binding and loosing—forgiving and retaining sins. It is clear—as clear as if written with a sunbeam—that the power of the Levitical priests was only a declarative power, a power to declare and pronounce the healthy or diseased state of the man. They could not make the man either healthy or diseased. They neither gave the leprosy nor took it away. *That* was the act of God himself. And the authority given to the priests was only to declare and pronounce that which God had done. It was a power purely declarative. Now as it was this which was in the mind of our Lord when he spoke these words, the inference is only natural that the power which he gave was only a declarative power—a power to declare and pronounce the repentant sinner to be forgiven: not to forgive him, but to declare and pronounce him forgiven. The forgiveness was the act of God himself, and the authority he gave was to declare and pronounce that which was done by Himself.

That this is the true purport of our Lord's words, and the real nature of the power given, will appear from a concise, simple, and scriptural argument. We read—"And the Lord

spake unto Moses and Aaron, saying, When a man shall have in the skin of his flesh a rising, a scab, or bright spot, and it be in the skin of his flesh like the plague of leprosy; then he shall be brought unto Aaron the priest, or unto one of his sons the priests: and the priest shall look on the plague in the skin of the flesh: and when the hair in the plague is turned white, and the plague in sight be deeper than the skin of his flesh, it is a plague of leprosy: and the priest shall look on him, and *pronounce him unclean*. If the bright spot be white in the skin of his flesh, and in sight be not deeper than the skin, and the hair thereof be not turned white; then the priest *shall shut up* him that hath the plague seven days: and the priest shall look on him the seventh day: and, behold, if the plague in his sight be at a stay, and the plague spread not in the skin; then the priest *shall shut him up* seven days more: and the priest shall look on him again the seventh day: and, behold, if the plague be somewhat dark, and the plague spread not in the skin, the priest shall *pronounce him clean*: it is but a scab: and he shall wash his clothes, and be clean.”—Leviticus xiii. 1-6.

It will be observed that the priest is here said to *pronounce* him unclean, at the third verse, and to *pronounce* him clean at the sixth verse. Again, we read at verses 11-13.—“It is an old leprosy in the skin of his flesh, and the priest shall *pronounce him unclean*, and shall not shut him up: for he is unclean. And if a leprosy break out abroad in the skin, and the leprosy cover all the skin of him that hath the plague from his head even to his foot, wheresoever the priest looketh; then the priest shall consider: and, behold, if the leprosy have covered all his flesh, he shall *pronounce him clean* that hath the plague: it is all turned white: he is clean.”

Again, we read in verses 15-17—“And the priest shall see the raw flesh, and *pronounce him to be unclean*: for the raw flesh is unclean: it is a leprosy. Or if the raw flesh turn again, and be changed unto white, he shall come unto the priest; and the priest shall see him: and, behold, if the plague

be turned into white; then the priest shall *pronounce him clean* that hath the plague: he is clean."

It will be observed in all these, and the other places throughout this chapter, that the priest is said to *pronounce* the man unclean, or to *pronounce* him clean. And it is evident **HE COULD DO NO MORE**: He could not impart the leprosy, neither could he take away the leprosy. That was the work of God alone. The priest had power only to pronounce or declare the man infected or not infected, unclean or clean; and then, according to such declaration, the man was bound or loosed, separated from the congregation or permitted to mingle in the congregation. Now, the point of the argument, as connected with this chapter, is this: In the Septuagint version of the Scriptures, which was the version in general use among the Jews in the days of our Lord and His Apostles, the priest in this chapter is not said, as in our translation, to *pronounce the man unclean*, but he is said to *unclean* or *pollute* the man; and he is not said to *pronounce the man clean*, but he is said to *clean* the man. He is said to do that which he only declares or pronounces to be done. His powers were not to afflict the man with leprosy, or to take away the leprosy; not to make the man unclean or make the man clean; that rested with God alone, but his powers were to pronounce and declare him to be clean, or to pronounce and declare him to be unclean, according as he found him. Now as this was the version of the Scriptures, in general use in the days of our Lord, and the version usually quoted by him; so from that very circumstance this form of expression was one which our Lord was very likely to use, and which his apostles and disciples were likely to understand. When, therefore, He empowered them to remit or retain sin, and so bind or loose the sinner, He merely used the language of the Levitical law, and must have designed them to understand that they, like the Levitical priesthood, were to declare and pronounce the forgiveness or nonforgiveness of sin, and so bind or loose the sinner;—that as the Levitical priesthood were authorized to declare and pronounce a man clean or unclean in the matter

of leprosy, so now his disciples were to declare and pronounce the forgiveness or non-forgiveness of God in the matter of sin. And therefore, I conclude, that in using this language our Lord designed to impart an authority to his people, not to grant His forgiveness or to refuse His forgiveness; which belonged to himself alone, but in His name to declare and pronounce His forgiveness to the sinner.

And now, to bring all this argument to a point: I hold that every man lay as well as clerical, has authority to proclaim the Gospel, to preach Christ. And I hold, also, that every man, lay as well as clerical, has authority to declare and pronounce Christ's absolution and forgiveness of sin to all those that repent. This is the inherent birthright of every child of God—the inheritance into which he is engrafted when he is born again of the Holy Spirit. It is true that **THE CHURCH**, that is, *the clergy and laity combined*, may find it wise and convenient and salutary to delegate this authority, and especially with reference to offenses against the church, more especially to a portion of their number, namely, to the clergy, as having been specially dedicated to this work. And it may, perhaps, be found wise and convenient and salutary that the clergy should thus exercise, in the name of the church, this special and delegated authority; but then they do it, and must do, and can only do it, as from **THE CHURCH**;—not as from Christ, but only as from the church which has committed this delegated authority to them. Jesus Christ has retained to himself the power of forgiveness of sins. He alone can forgive sins against God. And his church, that is, the clergy and laity combined, which of course can forgive sins against herself, can absolve the sinner by receiving him into her communion.

I believe that a candid examination of Matt. xviii. 18, in its context, will show that our Lord is alluding only to the offenses or injuries done among us, against each other—that he gives us the power to forgive each other, promising to ratify it in heaven. And it is probable that the place in John xx. 23, may refer either to the same thing, or to offenses or

injuries to the church at large ; thus giving to the church the power of forgiving those who have wronged her. And if the words in either place can be interpreted of sins as against God—a most doubtful supposition, and one that has not the least warrant from Holy Scripture—they must be explained by the principles of the Levitical law ; under that law the priests declared and pronounced on the cleanness and uncleanness of the leper, and those priests were the type of all believers ; who constitute “the spiritual priesthood,” and who, whether clerical or lay, can declare and pronounce the forgiveness of God in Christ, for every sinner who repents and believes the Gospel ; and who, if clerical or ministerial, that is, specially chosen and sent as the ministers of the Church and the heralds of the Gospel, are specially authorized to do this.

I feel it to be a great practical objection to the whole system of auricular confession and absolution, that it is incompatible with the purity of divine justice. In order that divine justice may be truly pure it must be dispensed by impartial and by discriminating hands. And there is, therefore, nothing more essential than that the God of all the earth should retain it in his own hands. It is God himself who tries the sinner. It is God himself who holds the balance. It is God himself who holds the sword of judgment or the scepter of mercy. Thus, in our Protestant principles, all is well. But it is far otherwise in the Church of Rome. In the blindness of poor fallen man, in the clouded judgment of miserable man, in the partialities, and prejudices, and corruptions of human nature, there can be no adequate security for the due and righteous administration of divine justice ; it would be wholly inconsistent with the equality of God’s dealings, to delegate a power which requires divine perfection, omniscience, and purity, to a creature so fallen as man. He is an unfitting judge for the eternal destinies of his fellow-men. With such a belief, nothing can give security. There should be the plainest, and most unmistakable evidence of His delegating this power of forgiving or condemning sin to any one class or caste of the human fam-

ily, before we can believe it. And that plain and unmistakable evidence is not pretended.

So far from this being the case, we may argue beforehand its impossibility—its entire inconsistency with the majesty of the Godhead. For what is the loveliest and most glorious attribute in the Divine nature, if it be not the forgiveness of sins? what is the brightest and most glorious jewel in the crown of the Eternal, if it be not the forgiveness of sins? And can it be—can we for a moment imagine, that Jehovah has committed that which is the glory of His nature, the essence of His reconciled Godhead, and the jewel of His royal diadem, into the hands of man—that He has parted with the noblest attribute of His Godhead, and delegated the scepter of mercy into the hands of men? We believe, that God has reserved all His essential attributes to Himself. He is omniscient, and He has communicated that omniscience to none, or otherwise He would not be the alone Omniscient: He is omnipresent, and has delegated His omnipresence to none, or otherwise He would not be the alone Omnipresent: He is omnipotent, and He has imparted His omnipotence to none, or otherwise He would not be the alone Omnipotent. And the same is true of the forgiveness of sins. The delegation of such prerogatives to the creature, would be placing the creature on an equality with the Creator. He could not himself extend forgiveness to fallen man till He had given His own Son to make atonement for the sins of man. Our forgiveness cost the Lord Jesus the glories of the heavens which He forsook, the sufferings of the earth which He entered, the humiliation of the flesh which He undertook, the agony and bloody sweat, the exceeding sorrow of His soul unto death, and the slow, lingering, horrid death of the cross. Our forgiveness cost Him agonies no tongue can tell: for they were infinite as the sins for which He suffered, and as the justice which He satisfied. And it can not be, that the jewel of forgiveness, that brightest gem in the diadem of our reconciled God, that precious treasure which He has purchased at such a price as the blood of the cross, and which flashes the most brilliant luster of all else

that is seen in the heavens—it can not be, that He has given this to the defiled hands and the perverted judgments and fallen hearts of sinners like ourselves, that we may have the dispensing of his treasures to others. He has no more delegated to man the power of forgiveness than He has delegated to man the power of creation. And the priests or ministers of the Church might assume the Divine prerogative of creation, as well and as reasonably, as assume the Divine prerogative of forgiveness. For mortal and fallen man, yea, for immortal and unfallen angel, to pretend to the powers—the Divine powers of creation, were not a greater offense to the glory of the alone Creator, than for either man or angel to pretend to the powers—the Divine powers, of the forgiveness of sins.

I was once discussing this point with a Roman Catholic priest, in the presence of some twenty Roman Catholics. They had brought him to me and had put him forward to vindicate against me the power of forgiveness which he claimed.

I argued on that occasion, in a particular manner, with a view to the answer which I expected to receive from him and from all present, as I knew that my rejoinder would then be more effective. I argued that God in his mercy and loving-kindness would never have given to man a power so injurious to morality and so calculated to encourage sin.

When once men can be brought to believe that priests and ministers have power to forgive sins—to forgive the sins of the sinner against God, they become the veriest servants of those priests and ministers. We know from Holy Scripture, and all history and experience prove its truth, that men are willing to sacrifice thousands of rams, to offer ten thousand rivers of oil, and to give the fruit of their body, to get rid of the sin of their soul. If, therefore, such men can be brought to believe, that priests and ministers hold in their hands the scepter of forgiveness, they will become the veriest bondsmen—bound hand and foot at the feet of those who possess this power; and they will lay all their wealth at the feet of these priests and ministers, in order to purchase at their hands the forgiveness of their sins. And this, too, without any repent-

ance before God. The most abandoned profligate, the most filthy debauchee, the assassin, murderer, and villain, can secure forgiveness for all these hateful enormities, if only he can satisfy the priest or minister. And knowing as we do, the weakness and corruption of human nature, we can not be surprised at that which all history witnesses, that between money and favor and patronage, a rich man finds little difficulty in satisfying the priest or minister. The rich man has only to secure a soft, easy confessor, or a poor, cringing confessor, or a vicious and profligate confessor, and if once he has secured such a man, he has only to cajole the soft priest, to bribe the poor priest, to feed the cringing priest, to promote the aspiring priest, and to wink at the profligate priest, and then he is secure of the forgiveness of his sins. If this were part and parcel of Christianity—as it is part and parcel of Popery—it would be worse than heathenism itself, for it would enable men to sin and be forgiven, and sin again and be forgiven again; and a little favor, and more management and abundance of money, would be sure to secure forgiveness.

I have said nothing of the scenes of temptation that are necessarily associated with the confessional. It is in the sphere of every man's experience, that if he has by any means discovered the hidden thing—the secret thing of a woman's heart—if he has discovered her great secret, perhaps a secret that nestled in her own breast unknown to all beside, a secret of her sin, of her crime, or her sinful tendencies and her unholy thoughts, it is, I say in the sphere of every man's experience, that that woman whose secret he thus knows is in his power. How he may be disposed to use his power is another question; but he knows that that woman is in his power, and full often he may use that power for the worst and basest of purposes. It is also in the sphere of any woman's experience, that if she has committed any crime against the laws—any sin against morality, she tries to guard her secret in the depths of her own heart, and she feels that if she divulge it to any man, or if any man has got possession of it, she is in his power. She is no longer her own mistress, she

becomes his slave. Fear and suspicion of his betraying her places her forever at his feet, she can not refuse him any demand. And it is the same between man and man. And this is the confessional; it places the secret of every woman in the breast of the priest, she is thus in his power for every purpose. It places the secret of every man in the power of the priest. He is from that moment his slave. This is an objection to the confessional to which I know of no satisfactory reply. For it necessarily places both the priest and the penitent under circumstances too trying for flesh and blood. Priests may be priests, but still the experience of mankind shows they are flesh and blood like others. And sure I am, that, considering the nature of the communications that pass—considering their indelicacy and indecency—considering they go not to the actions, but to the secret thoughts and concealed desires, all the most private, personal, mysterious feelings of our fleshly nature—sure I am, that that God who desired us to pray, that we be not led into temptation, never himself required us to rush into that worst of all scenes of temptation—the Roman Confessional.

And then, finally, I have said nothing of that which interferes with all the most sacred sanctities of home, where the husband and wife should live and love in the most perfect and mutual confidence. There—there amid our homes, and beside our hearths, sits the priest of the confessional. That man, by means of the confessional, knows more of the wife's heart and thoughts and feelings, he has more of her confidence, and knows more of her secrets, than even her own husband. Whatever thought of evil or of good has place in her mind—whatever feeling of fondness, or of alienations of love, or of coldness, has found a home in her heart—whatever desire of infidelity to her vows, or of first love to her husband has laid hold of her flesh—whatever it be, it is known to the confessor. All may be kept secret and unknown from all others, a cherished secret, and a mystery within her, scarcely breathed to herself, and concealed even from her husband—all is revealed in the confessional. All is known, for it has

been whispered in the ear of that confidant of another sex—that most dangerous of all things, the unmarried confidant of another sex—the man of the confessional! There he sits between the husband and the wife. By day and by night he has more of the secret confidence—more of the secrets, the heart-secrets of each, than is known to each other. There he sits, sometimes the kindly adviser, and sometimes the lascivious tempter. There he sits, a mysterious being, knowing the heart-secrets of both—knowing perhaps the secret infidelity of both, and thus having both in his power, able to wield them both to his personal purpose. There he sits, the living and continual representative of that scene, when in the Garden of Eden, the man and the woman lived and loved together, and were holy when alone, but one entered, and there was whispering with the woman, and insidious questions were put to her, and she fell! It was the type of the confessional.

NOTE.—It is a favorite objection against us, that in the Church of England the power of forgiving sins is claimed as strongly as in the Church of Rome. And when it is said, in reply to this, that the Church of England merely authorizes a declarative forgiveness—"power to declare, and pronounce to his people being penitent, the absolution and remission of their sins;" that is, a power, not to forgive, but only to "declare and pronounce" that "God pardoneth and absolveth all them that truly repent, and unfeignedly believe in his holy Gospel." When this is said in reply to the objection, it is usually met by a reference to the form of absolution used in the office for the visitation of the sick.

The form is as follows, and will be found to be merely the exponent of the opinions already expressed.

"Our Lord Jesus Christ—who hath left power to HIS CHURCH, to *absolve* all sinners who truly repent and believe in Him—*forgive* thee thine offenses. And by his authority *committed to me*, I absolve thee of all thy sins in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

Here the power of *forgiveness of sins* is expressly reserved, as the act and promise of Jesus Christ; and the words are in the form of a prayer, that Jesus Christ might forgive the sinner. "The Lord Jesus Christ—*forgive* thee thine offenses."

And the power of *absolving* is expressly attributed to THE CHURCH,

not to the clergy or priesthood alone, but to the church, which is defined as "a congregation of faithful people, etc.," consisting of both clergy and laity; and this power, for communion, is *committed* by the church to the acting clergyman.

Thus the forgiveness of sins is described as the special work of the LORD JESUS CHRIST. And the absolving is ascribed to THE CHURCH, that is, to the clergy and laity combined. Now this *absolution* is a very different thing from *forgiveness*. The latter belongs exclusively to Christ; the former He has given to the Church. The difference between them is this:—As the Levitical priest looked on the leper who was healed, he saw that God had healed or cleansed him; and that he might now loose him from the restraint that prevented his mingling with the people. God healed or cleansed the man. The priest pronounced him so healed or cleansed of God, and loosed him of his restraint. So under the Gospel, it is only Christ that can forgive the sin of the sinner. And when the minister sees the repentance of the sinner—sees that Christ has forgiven him and given him repentance—he absolves him, that is, he frees him from the restraint which the discipline of the church has imposed upon him, and thus receives him again into the communion of the church. Christ has given forgiveness. The minister of the church then absolves the man. The truth is, that the old language of theology applied the word "forgiveness" to the sin of the soul, in its relation to God; while it applied the word "absolution" to the position of the offending man, in relation to the church.

I have frequently stated, when giving this answer to my friends of the Church of Rome, that I felt the objection ought never to have come from them—that when the Liturgy was in process of compilation, a very large proportion of the population still retained their old love; perhaps, a superstitious, but certainly a very old love for the Roman absolution in the point of death—that in a kindly, and loving, and motherly spirit toward such weak consciences—toward such weak children, the Church of England consented, that to such as "humbly and heartily desire it," the minister should pronounce this absolution. She did this in the fullness of love, and gentleness, and compassion for them and their weak consciences; and all she guarded against was—that she should not seem to claim the power of forgiving the sin. She, therefore, carefully ascribes this to Christ alone; and only claims to her herself the right to absolution. Having done this in so true and compassionate a spirit toward those who were still so much Romanists, I feel that the objection ought never to have come from the Church of Rome.

THE USE OF AN UNKNOWN LANGUAGE IN PUBLIC WORSHIP.

The Use of the Latin Tongue in all the Liturgical Services of the Church of Rome—Its Incapacity for Edifying the People—Considered as a Matter of Discipline—Its Inconsistency with the Gift of Tongues—Its Opposition to the Holy Scriptures—Its supposed Convenience for Travelers—Its alleged Universality and Antiquity considered—The Devotional Books read during the Public Services—The Argument based on Unity or Uniformity in Worship—Its supposed Justification in Holy Scripture.

THE following conversation arose out of a public meeting. It was a meeting of the Bible Society, and was held in a village, small and remote. I had spoken, and in referring to the opposition to the circulation of the Holy Scriptures, then warmly carried on by the Roman Catholic priesthood, I expressed my surprise at the apparent inconsistency they exhibited. I stated that they celebrated the sacrifices of the mass in the Latin tongue—a tongue which was not understood, probably, by one solitary individual in the congregation. It was to them hard, indeed impossible to be understood; and yet the people attended but understood not, and they heard but understood not; but they still attended and still heard, and were taught and required, as necessary to salvation, still to attend and still to hear, although they felt and knew that they could not understand a word of it. I then said that the inconsistency of the Roman Catholic priests was this—they commanded the people not to read or hear the Holy Scriptures, because they were hard to be understood—because none but the learned could understand them—because the ignorant people could not understand them; whereas they commanded the people to attend and hear mass, which was celebrated in the Latin language, although it was impossible to understand

it. There was here an inconsistency, for if the difficulty of understanding the language of Holy Scripture were a sufficient reason for not reading or hearing them ; then the difficulty of understanding the Latin language of the mass must be a sufficient reason for not attending or hearing it.

This argument had made a considerable impression on some Roman Catholics who were present in the meeting ; and the following conversation was with one of these. It commenced with some reference to the foregoing inconsistency, and after a time turned altogether upon the practice of the Church of Rome.

I was careful that I should not speak in a tone of controversy, as if searching to show how widely we differed ; but rather to speak to his judgment and common sense and good feeling, and then lead him to the inferences he might himself be disposed to draw.

I commenced, by saying, that I thought the great mission of the church was, by teaching and instruction to overcome the ignorance and the indifference of the world—that the vice and immorality that prevailed seemed to spring from our fallen nature—and that the divine mission of the Church was to grapple with the ignorance and indifference of men—to elevate them above the world in which they lived, and perfect them for a higher and a purer sphere—by presenting the light of revealed religion and developing the true principles of morality, and unfolding the glorious promises of the gospel of Christ—that with that view she ought to give all her energies to the enlightening the ignorance and darkness that prevail—that carefully avoiding the unintelligible, or whatever was not calculated to instruct, she should order all things so as to realize the apostle's maxim, "let all things be done to edification"—that avoiding every thing that was beyond the capacities of the masses of mankind, she should arrange all things in the worship of God, so as to be most adapted for the instruction of the ignorant, and for the edification of the many, and for the elevation of all, thus realizing the true mission of the Church of Christ as the great teacher of mankind.

All this was at once assented to. I therefore went on to say, that it was on this principle that the Church of England, and all the Protestant Churches, acted in all their arrangements for public worship. The Holy Scriptures are read publicly for the divine teaching of the people. Exhortations, expositions, sermons are added to illustrate, enforce and apply the word of God. The Lord's Supper, which represents and teaches how the Saviour died on the cross for the salvation of His people—the Baptism, which symbolizes and teaches that as water cleanses the outward body, so the Holy Spirit must wash and cleanse the inner and outer life alike from the love and practice of sin—these sacramental rites, with all the praises and thanksgivings and intercessions and prayers, are expressed in the clearest and simplest language, in the common language of the people, so that all may hear and understand, and be instructed and edified. The Protestant Churches thus realize the mission of the Church as the great teacher of mankind. But the Church of Rome presents a striking contrast to all this. All her services for Baptism, for the Lord's Supper, for the sacrifice of the mass, and all her sacramental rites, are conducted in the Latin language. And the consequence is that in her public worship every thing is above and beyond the comprehension of the masses of her people, and therefore can not tend to their enlightenment or edification.

It was at once acknowledged that all this was true; at least, that these services being in the Latin language, were unintelligible to the people; but, it was added, that although the people did not understand the words, that is, the prayers, yet they were so well instructed in the nature of these services that they understood them in all that was necessary, and could piously and devoutly join in them, not perhaps, saying the very same prayers, but still saying some prayers of their own, and thus joining in the holy mysteries with devotion and profit.

I replied, that there could be no doubt of the deep, earnest, heartfelt devotion of many who attended these services, however unintelligible. I had lived too much among Roman

Catholics and seen too much of their system, not to know and feel that there was true-hearted and humble devotion among many. But, I added, that this was different from the system, and, as I believed, despite of the system. The result—the natural result of this system is, that as the congregation can not understand the Latin liturgy, they supply themselves with other and totally different liturgies in their own language. One has “The Garden of the Soul,” and another “The Key to Heaven;” some employ “The Path to Paradise,” and others “The Sacred Heart.” Every member supplies himself with such liturgical or devotional book as may suit his peculiar taste, each being different from the other, and all agreeing only in being totally different from the service as performed by the officiating priest at the altar; no two forms of prayer in these books being the same, and all being different from the authorized liturgy, the Latin liturgy made use of by the priest! A state of things like this is wholly incapable of instructing or edifying the people. They hear it, but they do not comprehend it. They see it, but they do not understand it. They attend it, but they do not take part in it. And the consequence is, that being utterly unconscious of what is saying at the altar, it has become the universal practice to ring a little bell to give notice to the congregation when the Host is about to be elevated, and they are to prostrate themselves to adore it! They seem to have no better way of knowing the moment—not knowing the language of the service—than the ringing of a little bell!

I have always found this method of reasoning have its natural influence on all who are capable of being influenced by any thing. In general, Roman Catholics of mind and feeling and education express their regret that such a system should be retained in their Church. My present companion was frank and open on the point, adding, however, that it was merely a matter of discipline and not a matter of faith; and that the pope could at any time command a change, by which all the services should be celebrated in the common language of every country.

To this the reply was obvious, and I could not hesitate in making it—namely, that this apology only makes the matter worse than before; for, if the practice were one of necessity, one that was unalterable, there would be no need of further excuse; but when it is admitted that there is no such necessity—that it is in the power of the pontiff to alter it, then the objection becomes still more fatal against a system so unreasonable and unedifying and wrong in itself, and which might be so easily reformed if they would.

When the argument was in this position I urged that the pope has no right to enforce a practice, not only objectionable and unedifying in itself, but directly contrary to the plain language of Holy Scripture. And then opening the volume, I commenced by reading the second chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, from the first to the eleventh verses—“And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven. Now when this was noised abroad the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language. And they were all amazed and marveled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galileans? And how hear we every man in our own tongue wherein we were born? Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judæa, and Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia, Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes, Cretes and Arabians, do we hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God.” The argument on this is, that it details that wonderful event by which the foundations of the Christian Church were

laid—the gift of tongues. Our Lord had commanded His apostles to go forth and preach the Gospel to every nation, teaching them and baptizing them. And now, to enable them to do this, the Holy Spirit shed on them this miraculous gift of being able to understand and speak all the languages of the nations among whom they were to preach, and teach, and baptize. The wonderful character of this miracle was immediately perceptible. And “every man heard them speak in their own language, and they were all amazed and marveled, saying—How hear we every man in our own tongue wherein we were born?—we do hear them speak in our own tongues the wonderful works of God.” Here was the fundamental miracle of the Christian Church, and for any particular or national Church, as that of Rome, to prohibit the use of a known tongue in the services of public worship—to compel the service of the Lord’s Supper, which preaches “the wonderful work” of the dying Saviour—to compel the administration of Baptism, which teaches “the wonderful work” of the Holy Spirit—to compel these to be celebrated in the Latin language instead of the common language of the people, is an act in direct contradiction of this fundamental miracle of the Christian Church. It was plainly intended that every country should enjoy the ministrations of Christ’s Church in the language of the country, and not in a dead, unknown tongue, which is not spoken in any one country on the face of God’s wide creation. But, instead of this, and against this, which clearly implies, not a uniformity but a diversity of languages, the Church of Rome requires, that whether in Italy or in Spain, whether in France or in Ireland, whether among the Hottentots of Africa, among the Chinese of Asia, or the Red Indians of America, the great services—all the sacramental services of the Church shall be administered in the Latin language, so that none can understand, none can be edified, and all the services seem a mysterious charm and unintelligible incantation. If it had been the will of God that all the services of His Church were to be in Latin, He could have given the

single gift of the Latin tongue. That alone had sufficed and there was no need of the gifts of other tongues.

I have never known any serious attempt to answer this argument from the gift of tongues. I have, indeed, known various efforts to excuse the Latin service, but I have never known any attempt worth the name of an answer to this argument itself. There was no attempt on the present occasion, I, therefore, opened the fourteenth chapter of 1 Cor. and read—"Now, brethren, if I come unto you speaking with tongues, what shall I profit you, except I shall speak to you either by revelation, or by knowledge, or by prophesying or by doctrine? And even things without life giving sound, whether pipe or harp, except they give a distinction in the sounds, how shall it be known what is piped or harped? For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle? So likewise ye, except ye utter by the tongue words easy to be understood, how shall it be known what is spoken? for ye shall speak into the air. There are, it may be, so many kinds of voices in the world, and none of them is without signification. Therefore if I know not the meaning of the voice, I shall be unto him that speaketh a barbarian, and he that speaketh shall be a barbarian unto me." On this I remarked that the Apostle is alluding to the improper exercise of the gift of tongues, and reproving those who in the church used an unknown tongue. He argues from musical instruments, which must be intelligently played, in order to yield real harmony. He argues from the trumpet guiding armies in the battle-field, that if the sound be not understood it could not be obeyed; and so if the trumpet of the gospel be not intelligible, it can not be profitable in leading to the warfare against sin. And finally he states that so long as the minister of the church employs an unknown language, the ministers and the people will be no better than barbarians, that is, non-intelligent and unintelligible to each other.

To this it was objected that all this referred to the preaching of the Gospel to the people—that with that view the gift

of speaking in unknown tongues was given, and, accordingly, in the Church of Rome, they always and everywhere preached in the common language of the people—that all this Scripture referred to preaching and to praying, not to religious services.

To this I at once answered that the argument of the apostles goes further than this, applying it to prayer and praise, as well as to preaching and teaching; he says, “For if I pray in an unknown tongue, my spirit prayeth, but my understanding is unfruitful. What is it then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also; I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also. Else when thou shalt bless with the spirit, how shall he that occupieth the room of the unlearned say Amen at thy giving of thanks, seeing he understandeth not what thou sayest? For thou verily givest thanks well, but the other is not edified.” Here he applies the argument to prayer and praise, which constitute the main elements of public worship, and while he urges that the language should be understood, he asks in a tone that shows he felt his question was unanswerable. “When thou shalt bless with the spirit, how shall he that occupieth the room of the unlearned say Amen at thy giving of thanks, seeing that he understandeth not what thou sayest?” The apostle seems never to have thought of the invention of a little bell to be rung, that the unlearned might know, when they were to say this Amen to a prayer or thanksgiving, which they did not understand! My companion smiled at this, shook his head and said it was true—too true. I then continued, saying that the apostle goes yet further than this, in his argument against the system; for he says, “I thank my God, I speak with tongues more than ye all: Yet in the church I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that by my voice I might teach others also, than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue. Brethren, be not children in understanding: howbeit in malice be ye children, but in understanding be men. In the law it is written, With men of other tongues and other lips will I speak unto this people; and yet for all that will they not hear me, saith the Lord.

Wherefore tongues are for a sign, not to them that believe, but to them that believe not ; but prophesying serveth not for them that believe not, but for them which believe. If therefore the whole church be come together into one place, and all speak with tongues, and there shall come in those that are unlearned, or unbelievers, will they not say ye are mad ? But if all prophesy, and there come in one that believeth not, or one that is unlearned, he is convinced of all, he is judged of all : and thus are the secrets of his heart made manifest ; and so falling down upon his face he will worship God, and report that God is in you of a truth." In all this he states, that with all his knowledge of languages, he preferred to say five words in an intelligible language than a thousand which were unknown, or not understood. And if, as so many Romanists imagine, that the five words alluded to are *hoc enim est corpus meum*—"for this is my body"—the five mystic words by which the transubstantiation is effected in the mass, it will prove that the Canon of the mass should especially be read in a language known and understood by the people. Indeed the apostle adds, verse 20, that it seemed a very childish thing, and inconsistent with the understanding of thinking men, that this practice should be permitted : and he implies, verse 21, that such a practice was a curse and not a blessing. And he finally contrasts the two systems in their natural effects. In a service in an unknown tongue an unlearned man hears nothing but unintelligible sounds, and may well say that they are mad ; while in a service in the known language of the people, he enters, hears, and understands, and the message of the gospel convinces him of his sins, and leads him to prayer and the worship of God. The argument of the apostle is thus plain and cogent throughout. It is utterly inconsistent with the practice of the Church of Rome in her Latin services ; and however ingenious men may invent ingenious apologies and excuses for her practice, it must be admitted that her practice is directly opposed to the divine authority.

Among intelligent and candid Roman Catholics, I have never known an attempt to get rid of this argument of the

apostle : I have often pressed it, and often with the same effect. They feel it fully, and can not answer it. But instead of yielding to it, instead of bowing humbly and obediently to the Divine authority, they struggle against, and they endeavor to show that, *notwithstanding the judgment of the apostle*, there are some advantages in the Latin services. This, as might be expected, was the course pursued by my companion on the present occasion. He said that the universal use of Latin tends to unity or uniformity of worship, so as that, let a Roman Catholic travel where he may, he will be sure to find precisely the same form of worship, the same prayers, and in the same language—that by having the mass, and all the sacramental services always in the Latin language ; whether in China or Peru, whether in Canada or Algeria, whether in Spain or England, whether among the Indians of America or the peasantry of Ireland, the traveler will always find the services the same. Wherever the stranger wanders, wherever the emigrant settles, he hears the same well-known words, he hears the Catholic Church speaking to him in the same words ; words unintelligible perhaps, but still pleasant, because still the same ; he had heard them and loved them in his own land—always in the Latin language, always the same.

He spoke with vivacity. His thoughts were with some of his family, who had emigrated and were far away. He had traveled much, and seen much as a soldier in his youth. He was now contemplating emigration to join those who had gone before, to prepare the way. All this gave point and feeling to his words.

I said in reply, that whatever conveniences might be supposed to be connected with the practice, they could not excuse and certainly could not justify, a practice so plainly contrary to the clear language of Holy Scripture. And certainly a problematical convenience to a solitary traveler or a lonely emigrant was an insufficient justification. Travelers and emigrants will always be very few compared with the multitude. And, according to this argument, the vast multitude is inconvenienced for the sake of the few—the whole population is to

be inconvenienced by having worship celebrated in an unknown language which no one understands, and all for the convenience of a few travelers or emigrants! Such an argument implies that for the convenience of a few Spanish travelers or settlers in England, the whole population of England is to be inconvenienced by having their religious services in a language unintelligible to them—that for the convenience of a few Italian travelers or emigrants in Germany, the whole population of Germany must endure the inconvenience of their public worship being in a language they can not understand—that for the convenience of some Irish travelers or emigrants to America, the whole people of America must be subjected to the inconvenience of the Latin liturgy. This indeed, would be sacrificing the interests of the many to the convenience of the few—sacrificing a whole population to the wishes of a few travelers or emigrants. And, after all, I added, it could be no real or substantial advantage even to them. For, if a Spaniard, traveling or settling in England, could not understand a service in English, neither could he understand it in Latin. And although an Italian traveler or settler in Germany might not comprehend a service in German, yet he would be in the very same difficulty as not understanding a service in Latin. And as to an Irish traveler or emigrant in America, whether he could or could not understand an English service, he certainly would not find it more intelligible by finding it in Latin. And thus this convenience of a Latin service amounts simply to this—that wherever the traveler wanders, or the emigrant settles, he must find the services of his Church in a language which he does not understand!

This mode of meeting his argument did not seem to be palatable; perhaps it touched too closely his personal feelings respecting emigrants; he certainly took no notice of it, but immediately suggested another argument, one of very frequent use among the members of the Church of Rome.

He argued, that it had been the universal practice of the church—that in all ages, and in all places the liturgies were in the Latin tongue—that Latin was the language of the church,

and that it was a part of the communion of saints that the church in the present age should be found speaking to her children in the very same accents she had used in former ages, and that it belonged to the perpetuity and unchangeableness of the church to continue forever her services in the same language. And yet further, it was argued, that this use of the Latin tongue thus became an argument in favor of the Church of Rome ; as being a sign that she is still the same she ever was—the Holy Catholic Church.

I answered this, by saying that it was utterly erroneous—altogether wrong and untrue, to say that this was at all times and all places the universal practice of the church. The Church of Jesus Christ commenced in Jerusalem ; and all the gospels and epistles were written in Greek, and it was therefore probable that those, who like the apostles, usually wrote in Greek, spoke and prayed, and preached also in Greek. Indeed it is very certain, that all the earliest or primitive churches had their services in Greek ; for all the most ancient liturgies, which have come down to us, have been in the Greek language. And to this day the Greek Church, the Armenian Church, the Coptic Christians, the Nestorian Christians, the Syrian Christians, and all the Eastern Churches, have their liturgies in the languages of the East and not one of them use the Latin. [I could affirm this in some respect on personal knowledge, for I have heard the communion-services or liturgies of these Eastern Churches in five different forms and languages by the priests of so many different churches. A word of Latin was not used by any of them.] It is very true, I added, that in the Western or Latin Churches, inasmuch as the language of Western Europe was more Latin than any other, so the Latin was more generally used in their sacred services. It was the language then best understood, and therefore it was the language best to be used. It was the language of Rome and Italy and other countries, and was therefore the fittest language for the liturgies of those countries. But so far was this from being uniform, that we know of Spain, France, and England having different liturgies, and some even in different

languages. Even in Italy herself, her liturgies were not uniformly the same, and the fact is certain, that even there, in those parts of Italy that were colonized from Greece, the services were in the Greek language. In process of time—in process of some centuries, all those differences were gradually suppressed, and the Church of Rome was enabled to impose her Latin liturgy upon all, even after the Latin ceased to be a spoken language. For some centuries the Latin language has disappeared from Europe, but the Church of Rome retains the old and exploded tongue; and this is the real cause of the mass and other services being still in Latin—a language not understood by the people of any country in the world. The few learned may know it. The masses of the people do not understand one word of it.

My friend demurred to this. He did not, and he said with great courtesy, that he would not of course set his word against mine, but that he had read, that Latin was always the language of the Church of Rome. But, he added, that the people found no inconvenience in it, because they had translations, and a great variety of pious books, by means of which they could follow the priest, and understand the service; and he appealed to my own knowledge of the fact, as having often seen the members of the Roman Catholic congregations with their books, as devoutly reading during service, as the members of Protestant congregations.

My reply to this, was, that I certainly had seen many Roman Catholics reading their books in their churches, but not reading the service or liturgy of their Church—not following or reading with the officiating priest, either the original, or a translation. I reminded him, of there being no book of Common Prayer among them, there being no book of Common Prayer authorized by the Church of Rome—no authorized liturgy for the laity—and no authorized translation of the service of the mass, in any language. Each member selects any volume of devotions, or any compilations of prayers, that may be most suitable to his taste. There are of course great varieties of these, none of them being authorized by the Church

of Rome, and each member selecting such private compilation of private prayers, takes it to his place of worship, and occupies himself in these prayers, while the priest at the altar is reciting a form of prayers of a totally different character. [I have myself observed at Rome, cardinals, bishops, priests, monks, laymen, and women. I have myself looked into their books at such devotions, and have sometimes read with them out of the same book of prayers. I have seen one reading a psalm, another reading a prayer, some reading a litany, others reading a legend in the breviary, all devout and intent in their isolated way, but all reading what was not only different from each other, but altogether different from the priest officiating at the altar! They have no idea of the unity of worship, of the communion of prayer as it exists among us. It is among them just as it would be among us, if, while the minister was reading the litany, one portion of the congregation was reading the communion-service, and another portion was reading the morning prayer, and others poring over the forms for marriage or for baptism; or as if, while the minister was reading a chapter from the gospels, some of the congregation were reading the prophets, and others studying the epistles, or perhaps some reading Nelson's "Fasts and Festivals," while others were perusing Doddridge's "Rise and Progress." This is the practice in the Church of Rome, a practice so general as that it may be called universal.] There is, perhaps, scarcely one individual in the whole congregation who reads the translation of the services, so as to enable him to understand the service and follow the priest who officiates. But many a one thinks he does so, for in many of their devotional books there are prayers entitled "prayers that may be said during the mass," and in their simplicity, they imagine these to be translations of the service of the mass. They are totally different—different in their form, and no less different in their object. The very title of those prayers implies this difference, and therefore it is a simple fiction to assert that there is no inconvenience in the Latin services on the ground

that they have translations in their prayer-books, to enable them to follow and understand.

Having appealed to the experience and knowledge of my companion on this point, he at once frankly acknowledged it. He said, they generally used a variety of prayer-books, but that in most of them, there was at the end a translation of the mass-service, which they could read if they wished, but that it was not their custom, as every one prayed for himself, and sometimes liked his own prayer-book better than the translation. He then added, that he had lately read another reason for the Latin tongue.

It was to the effect that it presented a graceful and beautiful conception—unity of language in worship. The Church was to be a universal brotherhood or society, extending through the whole world—comprehending men of every color, and of every clime, and of every tongue—and that the Church of Rome presented the glorious spectacle of such a brotherhood or society, speaking to all these in one and the same language, and habituating all these to a worship in which they all used only one common language. However separated in color or climate, by distance or by customs, in nature or in language, yet here in the highest of all acts of worship they were united, for every where there was only the one language. It was an anticipation of heaven, where all would yet speak but one language.

I replied that all this was only a fanciful idea, that might seem grand and beautiful to some, for there was no accounting for tastes, but was neither practical nor profitable. That the God of the universe permitted for wise purposes of his own, a diversity of languages among the nations in speaking of Him and of His works, and He certainly has given no reason to suppose that he has departed from this in the religious worship of his people. And as to a unity of language, it leads to a unity of unintelligibility, for as the Latin tongue is not the native tongue of any one people in the world, so the unity—the real unity which is obtained by it, is the fact that no people in the world shall understand it—a unity of being unintel-

ligible ! And this brotherhood or society is presented a spectacle before men and angels, as one, which for the sake of unity of language, has adopted a system which establishes them in a unity of non-intelligent worshippers !

I added that there was a far nobler and magnificent spectacle in looking upon the church as extending herself through every tongue, and nation, and people, and contemplating the children of the Saviour—the men of every hue and every land—those who look upon the mighty icebergs of the frozen north, those who breathe the perfumes of the sunny south, those who wander beside the ancient Euphrates, or dwell along the banks of the aged Nile, or hunt among the prairies of the gigantic Mississippi, the children of the oak, or the children of the palm-tree—contemplating all these, lifting up holy hands and grateful hearts and prayerful spirits, and believing minds, and trustful natures to Him, who has loved them, and given himself for them. And doing all this with unity of heart and soul, each in his own tongue, and in his own way, and in his own land, and among his own friends ; in all the diversity of language, and color of face, as well as of climate and of country. This seems to me a far more beautiful and nobler spectacle, and is a more holy, touching and acceptable sight in the eyes of Him with whom we have to do, than a mere unity of language, especially of a language which is not understood in any nation of the world—a unity of non-intelligent worshippers !

He shook his head at this, as if unwilling to receive it, but he offered nothing in reply. He was silent. With a few words on the necessity of religion being spiritual rather than ceremonial, and internal rather than external—as wrought *in us* and practiced *by us*, rather than an affair transacted by some priesthood *for us*, we parted.

It is very seldom that the members of the Church of Rome advance any further apology for this practice. In these countries, however, as Ireland and Italy, where they are in the deepest darkness, and where they regard religion as a matter which belongs not to the laity, but to the clergy, and which is

to be managed by the latter, for and in behalf of the former—a matter in which every thing that is essential is done *for* them and not *by* them—a matter which is of *external* ceremonial rather than *internal* operation—they sometimes argue that as the mass is a sacrifice, not done *by* them, but *for* them, so there can be no necessity for their understanding it. And they endeavor to justify this by alluding to the fact mentioned in the gospel narrative, where Zechariah is described as entering the temple to burn incense, where all the people were waiting without, neither understanding nor seeing what he did.

The answer to this reference to the Gospel narrative is that the burning incense in the holy place was a service appertaining to the priest alone. Those priests were typical persons, and their incense was a typical rite; and had no reference whatever to the people who waited without. They had no part in it, and had nothing to do with it. Those priests burning incense within the holy place were the types of those Christian persons—those faithful ones whom an apostle calls “a holy priesthood.” They were the types of all true believers, who live in a spirit of prayer, presenting their prayers forever in “the holy place” of the Church of Christ. But this had no reference to the people who were waiting without. They never saw it. They never had part in it, and as these were not their prayers nor words, so there was nothing for them to know or understand. Indeed, if the text proves any thing, it proves too much, for it would prove that if the mass be any thing of this nature, there is no necessity or use in the people seeing it, hearing it, attending or being present at it. They may as well stay without, and never approach it at all! And as for the argument that the mass is a sacrifice, it is at once met by the simple denial of such a doctrine; but even if it were all they assert, it could not justify the practice of the Church of Rome, for in a sacrifice, according to the Levitical law, the person who offered it had part in the act, as large a part as the priest; for he was to bring the victim to the door of the tabernacle where the altar was, he was to present the victim as his substitute, thereby showing his belief in “the

Lamb of God," by whom, as his substitute, all his sins were atoned for; he was to lay his hands upon its head, so as to identify himself universally with it, and acknowledge his sins over it, as acknowledging his sins to his Saviour, and there he was to slay the victim, showing his faith in the truth, that his salvation is only in the death of Him who died, "the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God." It was then that the priest, after having accepted it as his substitute, was to collect the blood and sprinkle it as directed by the law, showing that all our salvation is from the sprinkling of blood of "the Lamb of God." In all this, the persons who offered the sacrifice had more to do, and had a larger share in the ceremony, than the priest himself. And besides this, there was no form of words, there were no form of prayers, there were no forms of thanksgiving, there was nothing of the kind, so that no parallel can be drawn from these in favor of Latin services connected with the mass, to which the services presented no parallel whatever.

This argument, however, is now seldom urged except among those who regard religion as a matter belonging to the clergy and not to the people. In an age of light and of knowledge like the present, and in a country like this, in which every man feels he must understand all he is required to do, and in which it is universally felt that all worship of God on the part of intelligent creatures ought to be an intelligent worship, according to our Lord's words, "God is a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth," it would never do to argue that there is no need for the people to understand the prayers that constitute their worship. It would be arguing a foregone conclusion to discuss it.

I have generally found that in conversation, our opponents are perplexed and embarrassed by this practice of using the Latin language. This perplexity and embarrassment are increased where the members of the Church of Rome—and they are many—have felt and have reprobated the mischief of the practice, its unedifying nature, and the scandal it has caused, by giving us so strong a ground of exception against them.

It is a subject of constant regret among themselves. And in countries like these, where there is so much reflex light from intelligent Protestantism, penetrating even the dimness of Romanism, some of the bishops have felt themselves obliged to yield, and have allowed the Epistles and Gospels sometimes to be read in English, thus giving a small—a very small installment of their demands. And as this did not altogether satisfy, they have also allowed that at other hours, where there is not a mass or any sacramental service, or any of the authorized services, the people may have prayers, unauthorized prayers in English, either with or without the attendance of a priest; and the people are cajoled out of a translation of their authorized liturgies by the use, at uncanonical hours, of unauthorized forms in English!

PRAYER TO THE SAINTS.

The supposed Advantage of Prayer to the Saints—Objection arising from the Mediatorship of Christ—How can the Saints hear our Prayers—The Protestant View of the Saints contrasted with that of the Romanists—The Joy of Angels at the Sinner's Repentance—Inconsistency of the Romish Theory—Their supposed Sympathy with us—The Origin of the System of Rome—The true Source of Comfort in the Sympathy of Christ.

It was in conversation with a man of high moral character, that I took the opportunity of inquiring into the principle of his morality. He was a man of very high reputation for religious devotion, there was a religiousness about him that seemed to give a color to all he did ; so that in all his everyday dealings, and in the ordinary affairs of human life, in all his intercourse with his fellow-men, there was a deep sense of religion, a thorough and earnest religiousness that insured honesty, integrity, frankness, kindness, and charity. He was a man universally and deservedly respected ; for while religion was his profession, it was also his practice ; a religion that, whether right or wrong—and I feel and know that it was wrong—was real, unobtrusive, and simple. He was a man belonging to the class of small farmers, cultivating his holding, which, though small, was amply sufficient to supply all his wants, and those of his family ; so that he held a position which made him, in connection with his character, an independent and respected man.

It was in conversing with this excellent man, in whom I felt no ordinary interest as a Roman Catholic, that I asked him to explain to me how it was that he was enabled to resist the temptations to which so many others around him were constantly yielding. I knew the temptations of those around

him, I knew they too often yielded and fell into sin, and I was aware that this man had been enabled to escape them. I asked the question frankly, and he answered as frankly.

He said that he had devoted himself to St. Peter, the prince of the apostles, upon whom, as the Rock, our blessed Lord had built the Church; and that he endeavored to live as if St. Peter was beside him—that he endeavored always to realize the constant presence of that saint—that his earnest desire was to avoid doing any thing that might possibly displease him. He stated that whenever he was under temptation—whenever there was a danger of his yielding to any sin, he immediately called to mind the presence of that apostle, and asked himself the question, whether it might not be displeasing to him; and he added, that it was his experience, that the thought of giving grief or sorrow to St. Peter, was always able to induce him to resist the temptation and escape the sin.

This was his own account of the matter. And he was one who was not deficient either in shrewdness or intelligence. I had known some instances of persons bearing the same, precisely the same feeling toward the Virgin Mary, in reference to whom such cases are far from uncommon; but I do not recollect an instance so peculiar as this, where every thing was centered in St. Peter, and where there was not a word, and apparently not even a thought, of the Deity.

I therefore remarked to him, though with all gentleness, that he seemed to me to have substituted St. Peter for his Saviour and his God;—that, as it seemed to me, all true religion required of us to show this religiousness of feeling toward Christ, to realize his presence, and seek his favor, and to shrink from the thought of doing any thing that could wound the love of so loving a Saviour—that he, instead of this, had exalted Peter to the place of Christ—had substituted the creature for the Creator—and thus practically had made Peter his Saviour and his God.

He replied that he had no such intention—that such intention would be the last thing in his thoughts—that he was an

unlearned man, and could not enter into the niceties of such questions, but that he knew by experience that by devoting himself to St. Peter, and by thinking of him in the time of temptation, he was enabled to escape. And he was therefore sure that such devotedness on his part could not be deemed dishonoring to God.

I endeavored to impress on him that it was a renunciation of all true and right-minded allegiance to our earthly sovereign, either to dethrone him on the one hand, or to exalt a mere subject on the other, substituting him in the place of the sovereign, rendering to this subject the honor and the homage, and the obedience, and the loyalty, that rightfully belonged only to the sovereign—that the principle which he had expressed was thus practically dethroning the King of kings, by placing another, and that other a fallen and sinful creature, on the throne. I added, that he had touched one of the essential differences between the Church of England and the Church of Rome. The one always exalting the Saviour, the other exalting the saints; the one worshiping the Creator, the other substituting the creature in his stead.

I can not say that he seemed at all impressed with what I thus stated, yet he had listened with evident interest and respect, as, indeed, he habitually did whenever I conversed with him. So I remarked to him, that the success, or experience as he called it, of his system, might perhaps be accounted for by his thoughts being turned away from the temptation which he dreaded. I told him that my own habit was, that whenever I felt tempted to murmur, repine, or give way to any other temptation, I endeavored to bring my thoughts to some precious promise of the word of God, and then, by filling my mind with thoughts of the love or the gentleness, or the sufferings, or the death of Christ—filling my mind with the memory of his gracious words, and gentle invitations, and precious promises—filling my mind with thoughts of high hopes and a glorious future—I found that such thoughts of Christ shut out the thoughts of evil, and thus the temptation was overcome by these holy thoughts, suggested by the

Holy Spirit, who was ever ready to strengthen the children of God.

He seemed to me to like this mode of dealing with temptation ; and therefore, after pressing it somewhat more, I took occasion to ask him, how he could suppose St. Peter could know his thoughts and temptations, so as to help him in his time of need. If, I added, we come to God—to Christ, there is no difficulty. The omnipresence, the omniscience, and the omnipotence of Him, “whom the heaven of heavens can not contain,” explain every thing in reference to Him. But Peter was merely a man ; and though a sainted, that is, a holy man, yet he is now in heaven, and can not see the heart, or know the thoughts, or hear the prayers of his votaries on earth.

He seemed at first to think lightly of this, as if he had always thought it a matter of course, that the saint in heaven could know the thoughts and see the devotion and hear the prayers of his votaries on earth. His manner and his first natural expressions showed that he had always assumed this in his mind—that he had always taken it for granted—that a doubt of it had never passed over his thoughts. But after a few moments there seemed to pass over him a cloud, and he was silent and thoughtful. I saw the cause, and therefore urged the point further, saying that it seemed to me unreasonable and impossible, that when men were praying in China, in Canada, in Egypt, in Russia, in Italy, in England, to one and the same saint in heaven, and at one and the same time—when not a few but many millions were so engaged—it seemed, I said, unreasonable and impossible, that the saint should hear and understand them all. I added, that as prayer was not merely the utterance of words that could be heard, but was often the sigh and wish and aspiration of the soul, unspoken and unheard, so it was impossible to see and know the devotedness or the worship of any votaries, without knowing the secret thoughts, the minds, and hearts of all ; so as to be able to judge of the earnestness, the sincerity, the piety, the religiousness of the parties. There can be no use in praying to the saint, unless he is able, in the height, and glory,

and happiness of heaven, to see, and hear, and know all—not some, but all—that passes in the hearts and minds of men on earth. And he must also know all their trials, weaknesses, temptations, so as to know all the circumstances that aggravate their sins, and all the peculiarities that extenuate their failings. There is no such difficulty in reference to Him of whom it is said: “He searcheth the heart and trieth the reins;” and again, “Thou knowest all things;” and again, “All things are naked and open before the eyes of him with whom we have to do.” This is true of the great Omniscient, Omnipotent, and Omnipresent Spirit, and therefore we can come to him in prayer, in the fullest certainty of his being able both to hear and to answer. But as to any saint in heaven, finite creature as he must be, to enrobe him with such attributes, would be a worshipping the creature as the Creator—it would be an investing him with the essence of the Godhead.

He was a man of too much intelligence not to see the importance of this consideration; and he had too much simplicity not to acknowledge the difficulty that it threw in the way of his theory. But it was apparent from what he said that he had entertained some very high imaginings about the power and holiness and privileges of the saints, and was jealous of an argument which went to strip them of that which was habitually associated in his mind with all his ideas of the saints. And he asked me earnestly, whether I really thought it possible they could be saints in glory and yet be unacquainted with all below.

I replied, that I had evidently far higher ideas of the happiness and glory of the saints in heaven, than he seemed to entertain, and that it was he who was depriving them of their truest and loftiest privileges and blessedness.

He seemed unable to understand this without explanation, and he asked me to explain myself, for he had always felt that the Church of Rome paid infinitely more reverence to the saints than did the Protestant Church; for that Protestants neither pray to them, nor to their pictures, nor kneel to them,

and seem to think no more of them than if there were no saints whatever in glory.

I stated in reply, with every expression of kindness and gentleness to those who live in error, from having been long habituated to it from their earliest childhood, that Roman Catholics seemed to me to think too poorly, too meanly of the state of the saints, and that the Protestants seemed on the other hand to regard them in a far higher light. I said that we believed from some passages in the Holy Scriptures that the saints are in heaven—that they are in the company of Jesus Christ—that they are in the very presence of God—that there, amid a countless multitude of angels and of redeemed souls, they live in a state of profound adoration, and blessing and praise, ever looking upon God, praising his goodness, wondering at his glories, and loving him as the object of all holy love. There they are in a state of the most perfect holiness, and in the enjoyment of an unutterable happiness. No cloud can even dim the brightness of God's countenance. No shadow can ever pass over their thoughts to sadden them. No thought or no vision can ever come over their happy and blessed minds that could impair their perfect happiness and perfect blessedness, for there all was happiness and blessedness, amid scenes of the purest holiness, and if ever there were thoughts of the world and the scenes and the homes they had left forever, it was only to make them more full of thankfulness and gratitude to Him who had redeemed them, and washed them in His blood, and had purchased for them this glorious inheritance, so that their whole mind is filled with the thought of God, and their whole heart filled with the love of God.

I then read several passages of Scripture, as Rev. vii. 9-17; also xxi. 3-5; also xxii. 1-5. And after we had talked pleasantly and profitably on the glorious hopes of the Christian, I asked him whether he did not think that we Protestants held very high and lofty ideas of the glory and blessedness of the saints? He seemed to feel it, for he had entered very fully into all I said.

I therefore took the occasion to say that I thought it would mar and injure all this happiness, if the saints were to see and hear, and know all that was passing on earth. If a father or a mother could look down, and see and know all the sins, the follies, the sorrows, and the shame of their children—if they could see and know all the troubles and miseries, and disasters that befall them, it certainly would cloud and darken their brightest hours even in heaven. If a husband or a wife, who had lived holy on earth, and was now sainted in the skies, was destined to see and know the after-career of the one who was so long the partner of every thought, and the sharer of every feeling, and the companion of every pleasure; and to see and know themselves forgotten and unthought-of, and altogether unsorrowed and unwept—to see and know that all love was vanished, and infidelity come in—and all vows and promises broken and gone—and to see and know their place in the home, in the thoughts, in the affections, occupied by others, it certainly would be no source of increase to the happiness of their heaven. It will not be reasonable to suppose, that the saints in heaven see and know only that portion of the things of those they have left on earth, which is pleasant and flattering; they must also be supposed to see those that are unpleasant and painful. If they can hear our prayers to be delivered from sickness, or sorrow, or suffering, they can also hear our sighing under sorrow; our groaning under suffering; and our complaining under sickness. If they can see us in our hours of devotion, they can see us in our hours of recklessness; and if they can read the holy thoughts of our hearts, they can scan the unholy feelings of our bodies. If they can look on us in our acts of prayer, they can also look upon us in our works of sin; and, I added, that when we consider that in every one of us, even the holiest and the best, there is always more of evil than good; more of sin than holiness; more to be deplored than praised: we must conclude, that it would not be for the happiness of the saints in heaven, that they should be able to see or know what is passing on earth among those whom they left behind them.

My companion had listened with earnest attention, while I dwelt, at some length, on this point ; and although at first he said nothing, I yet felt that my argument was taking effect on his mind. It appeared as if his feeling was against me, while his judgment was with me ; so I reminded him, that our conversation had very much arisen out of his stating that one way in which he kept himself from the commission of sin, was reflecting how much his sin would grieve Saint Peter. Surely, if Saint Peter is grieved at every sin committed thus by all that believe in him, he can not but have more grief than joy in his heavenly state. It must be heart-breaking for him to witness all the alienation from God, all the departures from holiness, all the carelessness about the soul, all the ingratitude toward the Saviour, in short, all the folly, the vice, the unholiness, the worldliness, the unbelief, the sins, that cloud and darken our lives. On the other hand, if we shut out all this, so sad and so painful to a holy mind, and so inexpressibly sad and painful to those who are amid the holiness of heaven—if we shut out all this from their knowledge, and regard them as ever living in the presence of God, ever circling around the throne above, ever dwelling with the Saviour, ever associating with angelic spirits and redeemed souls, ever admiring his glories, wondering at his love, and praising his goodness, and thus living all holy and happy, without one thought to mar their holiness or dim their happiness, then indeed we have a far higher idea of the state of the saints above, than in supposing them to have any cognizance of the things on earth. We are told in the Holy Scriptures, that Josiah was removed from this life, in order that he might not know the evils that were about to befall the land. This implies that our removal to heaven removes us altogether, not only from the affairs of this present world, but also from the knowledge of them. And this seems essential to all real happiness for man.

He seemed to assent to all this, and said that it certainly gave a very high idea of the state and the happiness of the saints in glory ; adding that it must pain them much to see

or know the wickedness of men's hearts, and the many sins of the best among us.

I then remarked, that he could thus perceive that we Protestants had not less exalted notions of the saints, than had Roman Catholics. We regard them as in the highest holiness and happiness. And we desire and pray to be able to imitate them, and follow them in the example of their holiness, but we do not pray to them, because we think that prayer belongs exclusively to God, and also because we think the saints can not hear our prayers, and there is no use in praying to them, if they can not hear us.

After a pause of some duration, in which I left his mind to work on what had been said, he broke it by saying that it was plain from the words of the Scriptures, that the saints knew when we repented, for that the Blessed Saviour had said, there was joy in heaven in the presence of the angels of God, over the sinner that repents; so that, if they can know the repentance, they can know the prayers he has made to them. He asked me how I could explain that statement, consistently with the views I had expressed.

I said at once, that the words of our Lord had reference to the angels, and not to the saints—had reference to those angels, who are the ministers and messengers of his will throughout the world, and who are expressly said to be “ministering spirits, sent forth to minister unto them, that are the heirs of salvation.” It may be reasonable therefore to suppose that it is necessary for them in passing to and fro through the world to know some things respecting those on earth. But this is a widely different thing from the saints, who are not angelic spirits, but men who have been glorified in heaven; and although the children of God after the resurrection will be equal to the angels, yet it will be in holiness and happiness, and love of God, and not in office.

He saw this distinction clearly, and acknowledged its propriety, and added, that he did not remember having heard it pointed out before.

I then stated, that although that was the ordinary answer

given to this argument as derived from the particular Scripture to which he had referred, yet it was by no means the best or fittest answer—that the whole passage was sadly misunderstood, and perverted by many who ought to know better—and that, if he would bear with me for a few minutes, while I read and explained the place, I thought he would agree with me as to its real meaning, for that I never knew a really devout and religious mind that did not at once embrace that meaning when laid before it.

I then reminded him that the place to which he had referred, occurred in the fifteenth of the Gospel according to St. Luke; and that it occurred in a parable, of which there were three, all in the same chapter and all illustrating the same truth—a truth of the greatest encouragement and comfort to the believer. That truth was the joy and rejoicing it brought to the heart of God to receive the repentant and returning sinner. In the language of Holy Scripture, our God is described as compassionating, yearning over and loving the poor unhappy sinner, and then rejoicing when he sees him reflecting and returning to him. This is the truth—the joy of God—which our Lord is teaching in each of these three parables.

The first parable is that of the shepherd and the stray sheep, and it occurs at verse 4. The great and principal object of this parable is to show the yearning and carefulness of the shepherd for the sheep which he had lost, and his extreme joy at recovering it again. And as Jesus Christ is “the good shepherd,” and “the great Bishop and Shepherd of our souls,” so the object of the parable was to illustrate his joy in receiving again the wandering sinner, who had returned to the fold he had left; and to make this his joy the more apparent, he is described as telling it to all his friends, and desiring them to share in his rejoicing, illustrating as it were, our Lord proclaiming throughout the heavens above, the glad tidings of the lost sinner having repented and returned. “I say unto you that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth.” The parable shows the joy of the shepherd

rather than the joy of the friends, and so it is designed to illustrate the joy of God in the presence of all the angels of heaven, rather than merely the joy of the angels—the joy of our God, rather than the joy of his angels.

The second parable is at verse 8. The object here is evident, to show the esteem and value which this woman put on her piece of silver, which she had lost;—to show the carefulness and anxiety with which she sought it again—and her great delight at having found it; calling to all her friends and neighbors, and telling them of her joy, and asking them to rejoice with her. There can be no doubt that the intention of this was, to illustrate the love of the Saviour, yearning over and seeking the lost and wandering sinner; and so rejoicing at seeing his repentance, as that He proclaims the event to all the heavens, that the angelic spirits might hear and rejoice likewise. “Likewise, I say unto you, there is joy *in the presence* of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth.” Thus it is a joy *in the presence* of the angels, that is, a joy of God; not so much a joy of angels as a joy of God in their presence, that our Lord desires to describe.

The last of those remarkable parables is one universally known and understood; it is at verse 11. The point of this parable, taken in connection with the preceding ones, is where the Father is described as seeing his returning son, while yet afar off, running to meet him, and kissing him, and welcoming him lovingly as if he had never erred; and never even uttering a word of rebuke or unkindness; being so full of joy and rejoicing at receiving his prodigal and erring child, now repentant and returning. His telling his neighbors and friends is designed to show the greatness of his joy. There can be no mistake as to the purport of all this: it is impossible to read it without feeling that all is designed to illustrate the loving and fatherly heart of God, yearning after a lost and erring soul, and rejoicing over his repentance—“He desireth not the death of a sinner, but rather that he should turn from his sins and live.” The parable beautifully illustrates this yearning and loving spirit of our Father in heaven; and as beautifully

depicts the joy and happiness it brings to His heart, when the sinner turns from his sins and seeks again the bosom of his God. But it is apparent in all this, that the object of our Lord in the parable, was not to represent the knowledge or the love or the joy merely of the angels, but of that which is incomparably more important to us, namely, the knowledge and the love and the joy of God himself.

Having thus gone through each of the parables, and my companion having in a very lively way shown his assent to all I said, as I spoke of each of them, I endeavored to impress him with what was my own feeling; namely, that we lose all the real beauty and power of these parables, when we look on them as merely designed to illustrate the joy of angels over the repentant sinner. It is the joy of God himself—the joy of the Great and Ineffable One—the joy of our heavenly Father himself, it is this which the parables are designed to illustrate. And this is a well-spring of comfort and encouragement. It is nothing—comparatively nothing, to be told that the angels rejoice at the repentance of the sinner, though that is most true, and the parables imply it; but it is every thing to know that our God himself so loves us, so yearns over us, so watches us, so longs for our repentance that He, even He, rejoices to receive us; and so rejoices, that He shows that joy in the presence of all the angelic inhabitants of heaven, and invites them to share in his joy. There is no comfort, I added, and no encouragement whether in life or in death, like feeling in our hearts that God loves us, and rejoices to be gracious to us.

He fully entered into this feeling: he could conceive, he said, of nothing beyond it, and his whole countenance showed the reality of his words; but after a short pause he seemed doubtfully to shake his head, and he said it seemed too much, too high, too far beyond all that a poor sinner could hope or dream of. He had, he added, never dared to look so high, and had always felt that it was wonderful that even the holy angels, or the blessed saints should think of us. And surely, he said, the blessed saints, though now in glory, were once

like ourselves on earth, and could feel for us, and feel with us. It is true they were a thousand times more good, and holy, and full of grace; but still they were human creatures, and they may perhaps be the more able to feel with us, and it is therefore that Roman Catholics come to them, and pray them to pray for us, that God may through their intercession grant us what we fear ourselves to ask of Him. We feel that we are not worthy of coming to God, or of being heard by Him and therefore we humbly approach Him, through his blessed saints.

I said that I was quite aware of that, but that as I had said before, there was no use praying to those who could not hear us, and could not know our hearts or thoughts or prayers, so I looked on it as a very great error to pray to these saints who can not hear, instead of praying to that God who can hear us. And I reminded him that he had failed to show that the saints can hear, or know, or see any thing about us, and that the parables to which he had referred me, had been seen to involve nothing of the kind; so I again asked him to tell me how they can hear our prayers; how it was possible that any saint, even St. Peter, to whom he habitually prayed, or even the Virgin Mary, who was so much the object of prayer in the Church of Rome, could hear the prayers of their many votaries, offered in so many lands. With an infinite God we see no difficulty. His omnipotence, omniscience, and omnipresence accomplish all; but with finite beings like the saints all this is impossible. It is against reason to believe it, and there is nothing in revelation to sanction it.

He said that it might be, that though the saints could not of themselves know our prayers, yet God might reveal them to them; that thus it might be as in the parable, God calling to them, telling them, and then asking them to rejoice with Him. They might thus know our devotion, our praying, and all our reverence to them.

I answered that this was quite possible when taken generally, as that when God expressed and showed his joy, at the repentance of a sinner, the angels and saints in heaven might

see his joy and know the cause; but this was a different thing altogether from their hearing our prayers, seeing our devotions, and knowing our hearts. But besides this, this idea could not help his object. He supposed that God told our prayers to the saints, and that the saints revealed them back again to God—that He revealed our wants to the saints, and that the saints revealed them back again to God! This was not approaching God through the medium of the saints, but it was approaching the saints through the medium of God; or, to express the matter in another and more theological manner, it was not coming to God through the saints, as mediators of intercession with him, but it was coming to the saints through God, as a mediator of intercession with them! I added that I had often heard all this from devout and religious members of the Church of Rome, in their endeavors to excuse and justify their practice of praying to the saints in glory, but that it seemed to me to pass all the bounds of the reasonable. It seemed to throw rather an air of the ridiculous over the practice; for whereas you, yourself, have stated that you devote yourself and present your prayers to St. Peter, asking of him to pray to God for you—to intercede with God for you—to tell God your wants, and obtain them for you—after all it appears that it is not St. Peter who tells your wants to God, but God who must first tell them to St. Peter; and as for your prayers, it is not St. Peter who conveys them to God, but it is God who conveys them to St. Peter. And thus according to this hypothesis, your prayers must after all come first to God, he then reveals them to St. Peter, and then St. Peter prays them back again to God! Surely you do not think this idea justified, either by reason or by revelation.

But—he asked emphatically—would you not approach an earthly king or queen, through the medium of their favorites and courtiers? you would not presume to enter at once into the royal presence and make your request; in the same way ought we not—is it not more humble and reverential, to approach our God, the great God of Heaven, through those angels and saints who are his favorites and friends?

I answered by saying that even supposing his principle was sound and good, which I did not think it was, still he himself did not act on it, nor did his system base itself on it. His system was, to offer a prayer to a saint, which that saint could not hear—that God, the great God of Heaven, heard it first, and then told it to the saint, and that then the saint told it back again to God. According to this system you always go first to God, you always first approach God himself, and not his saints or angels. It is as if you had a petition to present to the king, and wished to present it through one of his favorites, but this favorite does not hear you, while the king himself does hear you; and therefore your system supposes the king to present your petition to his favorite, and then this favorite presents it back again on your behalf to the king! Thus, I added, your own system is a direct contradiction of your own argument.

He seemed much perplexed at this, and evidently could not see his way out of the labyrinth. And he was a man too honest and true, and too much in earnest as to religion, to make a mere effort at getting over a difficulty; so he endeavored to put the point in another light. He asked me whether I did not think the saints in glory were constantly praying for us on earth, at least that they were willing to pray for us;—that they were true and loving friends and brothers to us, and were always ready and willing to pray to God for us. And if this was the case, it could be no harm, no sin, to ask them to pray for us—and that this was all they meant by the *ora pro nobis*, the *pray for us*, in the Church of Rome.

I reminded him that they offered much more than a simple *ora pro nobis*—that they prayed of the saints for grace, for holiness, for piety, for sanctification, for devotion, for faith, for salvation—that all these petitions were embodied in several of their prayers, in their standard books of devotion. And that it was something more than a simple *ora pro nobis*, a simple *pray for us*. But, I added, that even supposing this were all, and supposing you have a pious friend and Christian brother in America, or in Asia, one who loves your soul, and con-

stantly prays for you; do you think you would be acting rationally or Christianly to go on your knees, and in this Europe, pray to a man in America or Asia to pray to God for you, when you are aware he can not hear you, or even know that you are praying to him or any one else? If he could hear you, if he could know it, if by letter or otherwise, he could be aware of it, there would be something reasonable in it; but so long as he can neither hear or know it, the thing must be most unreasonable.

He felt this fully, and acknowledged it. He had many friends and relations who had emigrated to America. He had sometimes contemplated going there himself, and therefore he was able fully to appreciate the allusion. I therefore took the occasion to strengthen my argument by asking him to repeat for me the *Confiteor*, or form of confession, as contained in their liturgy.

He at once complied, repeating the words.

I then observed, that in that form he had made confession of sin to God, to the Virgin Mary, to St. Peter, and to other saints, all alike; he made no distinction among them. I added, that I could understand his making confession to God, who could hear his words and know his heart;—that I could also understand his confession to the priest, who could hear his words, though he could not see his heart; but that I could not comprehend his making confession to Mary, to Peter, or to the other saints, who could not possibly hear his words or read his thoughts. Where, I asked, could be the use of confessing to those who can not hear you?

He stated frankly that he was unable to answer me—that the idea of the saints not knowing our confessions and prayers had never occurred to him, and that he had always taken it as a matter of course, as if it were a part of their blessedness in their state of glory. He had always thought thus; but he acknowledged he knew no way of explaining how or in what manner it was. He then stated, that he had always practiced it as taught in his Church, on the ground of its humility, as becoming a poor sinner like himself, to be humble, as unwill-

ing to come presumptuously and confidently into the presence of the great God ; and feeling that the blessed Virgin and St. Peter having been, like himself, once on earth, and living human lives, and knowing human infirmities, would have a sympathy and compassion—a sort of fellow-feeling for him—he could go to them more comfortably, and with more confidence than he could go into the presence of the great God. He said that he feared God, but that he had confidence in the blessed Mary and St. Peter—that there was something in his heart—a feeling which he could not well explain—which led him to this practice, and which was met and satisfied by it ; it seemed, so to speak, natural ; more natural to go to them than to God, and they would intercede for him and help him.

I said, in answer to this, that there were many wants, desires, and yearnings in our nature that our religion ought to answer and satisfy. And that it always seemed to me as a strong internal evidence for Christianity that it recognised and satisfied these cravings of the soul or inner nature of the man ; that it appeared to me as if the feeling he had expressed, namely, an expectation of sympathy and help from the saints, as being of the same nature with himself, instead of from one so infinitely removed above and beyond him, as was God himself, was a feeling of this very kind—a want or yearning that seems natural to us, and seems to require something in true religion to meet and satisfy it. I then remarked, that among the theological systems of the ancient heathens of Greece and Rome, this want was met and satisfied, in a way, by the enrollment of their great or useful men among the demigods, as Esculapius, Romulus, Bacchus, and a thousand others. It was supposed that the *Diis Majores*, the great gods, as Jupiter, etc., were too much above and beyond the reach of thought, or interest, or sympathy for mortals ; and therefore, men had recourse to the *Diis Minores*, or demi-gods, who had once been men on earth like themselves ; and who could be supposed capable of the requisite amount of sympathy for them ; and who, therefore, could and would stand

between them and the great gods, and become their mediators and intercessors.

My friend here broke in with a remark, as natural as it was true, namely, that this was precisely the same as the practice of the Church of Rome. He said it was wonderful how heathens, as they were without any light or teaching from the Church, yet living before the Church itself was founded, had been able to see this truth, and to imitate it beforehand. It seemed to him that there must have been some glimpses of true religion among them. The Jews had their sacrifices of blood, going before the sacrifice of the blood of Jesus Christ. And they had the supper of the Passover going before the blessed Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. But they had an express command and revelation for these, while the heathens of Greece and Rome, who had no such command or revelation, had their demi-gods to intercede for them with the great gods, long before the church had canonized the saints in glory to be our intercessors, our mediators of intercession with God. He asked me whether I could account for this.

I was not a little amused at the mixture of truth and error exhibited in these remarks ; and could not fail being impressed with the simplicity with which they were made. I said with as much kindness and delicacy as possible, when about to utter truths that were not likely to be acceptable, that the feeling of a certain want, or desire, or yearning, in our inner nature to which he had before adverted, was felt, naturally felt, among the heathens as much as among Christians ; and that they met, or tried to meet, and satisfy this feeling in very much the same way, at least in ways suitable to and consistent with their respective systems. The heathens selected a number of the greatest, best, and most useful men, and enrolled them among the demi-gods, and regarded them as their mediators of intercession. The Church of Rome also selected those who were the most remarkable among her members for religion, or zeal, or usefulness, and canonized them, placing them in the calendar of the saints, and having recourse to them as mediators of intercession. The two systems seemed

one and the same in principle. They were similar attempts to supply the yearnings and cravings of nature, to which we had already adverted. But, I added, that I could not consider them as two different systems, but only as one and the same, regarding one as a continuation of the other;—that however hard it might seem to bear upon the Church of Rome, yet I felt that the system of that Church was only a continuation of the heathen system—that, instead of meeting the wants of the soul as revealed Christianity meets it, she permitted the old system of the heathens to continue; transferring to the saints the worship previously paid to the demi-gods, and substituting Peter, and Paul, and Catherine, and Mary, for a Romulus, or a Mercury, or a Minerva, or a Juno.

I here took the opportunity of stating to my companion, who I knew loved the broad, and plain, and satisfying truths of the Gospel, that revelation had recognized that evident and palpable feeling of our inner nature, to which we had been referring—and had answered it in the fullest and only satisfying way. Revelation as contained in the Holy Scriptures, assumes that the natural man, the unconverted man, ordinarily looks on God as a God to be feared—that he generally looks on the attributes of greatness, omnipotence, justice, holiness the attributes that invest Him with that which makes Him to be feared rather than loved. Revelation then describes God as loving the world, so loving it as to give his Son for it, and then describes that Son as all gentleness, kindness, compassion, love, thus representing God to us in the opposite aspect, investing Him with all those characteristics, which make Him to be loved rather than feared. Revelation thus meets the inner craving, to which we have adverted, by showing God in a new and more accessible light, and then places before us that grand truth that in the Son of God, in Him who has loved us and given himself for us, in Him who has died the death, even the death of the cross for us, in Him who became man, and lived, and suffered, and died as man in our stead and on our behalf, in Him we have a Mediator—both a Mediator of redemption, having died for us, and a mediator of

intercession interceding for us ;—and who as having been a man, bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh, can sympathize with us. Here is one who has loved us as none other ever loved us—can sympathize with us as none other can sympathize, and can effectually intercede for us as none can else. And He, emphatically He, Jesus Christ the Good Shepherd, as well as the glorified Saviour, is the One who answers and satisfies this want and yearning of our nature. The language of Revelation is strong and explicit on this point, “There is one God and one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus.”—1 Tim. ii. 5. Again, “Although there be that are called gods, as there be gods many and lords many, yet to us there is but one God, even the Father, and one Lord Jesus Christ.”—1 Cor. viii. 5. Again, “I write unto you that ye sin not, and if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.”—John. ii. 2. This is the unvarying language of the Holy Scriptures. And it has been the sin of the Church of Rome, that while she sees and recognizes the want, and desire, and yearning of the soul for some mediator to intercede with God, she has not directed her children to Him whom Revelation has revealed, but has allowed the old mythological system of the heathens to continue. Instead of uprooting that system, and proclaiming the truth of Revelation, she has continued and consecrated the system of demi-gods, by the canonization of saints, and pointing to them as our Mediator of intercession.

My friend was in no degree hurt or irritated by this. Our conversation continued but a short time longer, partaking less of controversy, and touching on truths common to us both. We parted, he remarking that although I was the most decided Protestant he had ever met, and had said most against his Church, yet he always found that he was able to agree more with me than with any one else ; and that he could not account for this, but that such was the fact ;—upon which I remarked in leaving him, that it arose from our both being really in earnest about the salvation of souls, rather than the exaltation of Churches, and that there were truths which would

yet work their way to his heart, as they had done to mine. And that I had too much experience of death-beds not to know that those were the truths that alone sustained, comforted, and encouraged the dying man. Jesus Christ is the all and the only one, and I was sure that he would himself yet be brought sooner or later to feel and know it.

I added, that my parting word with him should be, that whenever he needed sympathy in heaven—whenever his soul was in need of the comforts of sympathy in heaven, he had only to remember Him who became man in order, among other things, to manifest his capacity for sympathizing with us. He is even now, while we are speaking of Him, thinking of us, and as “the Great High Priest of our profession,” interceding for us. I then opened my Bible and read—“Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an high priest which can not be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need. For every high priest taken from among men is ordained for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins. Who can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way; for that he himself also is compassed with infirmity.”—Hebrews iv. 14–16; v. 1, 2. And so we parted.

INVOCATION OF SAINTS.

The Value of Prayer rightly offered—The Litany to the Saints—How ascertained that all these are Saints of God—Whether in Heaven, or Purgatory, or Hell—Canonization by the Pope—Canonization, an affair of Formalities and of Money—Expenses of Canonization—How the True Saints can know the Hearts or hear the Prayers of their Votaries—Whether Roman Catholics only ask the Prayers of the Saints—Confessions of Sins to the Saints—Whether this Practice be enforced in the Church of Rome, or only recommended—Essential before Absolution and before Communion.

ANOTHER conversation on the same subject was carried on in a very different spirit, and with a very different person. He was one well-known for his virulence and violence against every thing connected with the Holy Scriptures or with Protestantism. It was thought that he was connected with some of the illegal societies that kept the country in constant excitement and disturbance, and certainly he was a bold and violent man. But he had considerable influence among a large class of the population, and was the leader in all the popular political movements of the day in his immediate neighborhood. He was thus a favorite with the priesthood of the Church of Rome, of whom he was a most zealous supporter, and by whom he was constantly employed as a convenient instrument for spreading agitation among the people.

This man took a very active part in checking the circulation of the Scriptures, and often succeeded in turning the minds of the people from religious inquiry, by entering on political questions, and thus supplanting religion by politics. At this period, large numbers of the Roman Catholics, sometimes so many as twenty at a time, used to meet together in one of their houses—used to open the sacred volume—read a chapter, and proceed to converse over its meaning. This system

was spreading a knowledge of the Holy Scriptures rapidly among the people. A spirit of inquiry was growing and extending, and the numbers who withdrew from the Church of Rome, showed to the priesthood that their fears of the circulation of the Scriptures were not without cause. Counsel was wisely taken. This man and two or three others, altogether under the influence of the priesthood, made it their business to visit all these little meetings for Scripture reading, and before the sacred volume was opened, they procured some newspapers containing the speeches of Mr. O'Connell, Mr. Sheil, and others of the popular orators of the day. At that time, these celebrated men spoke once a week at the meetings of the Catholic Association, and dilated on the wrongs and sufferings, real or imaginary, of the Roman Catholics of Ireland. The reading of these speeches gradually took the place of reading the Scriptures, and conversations on politics soon were substituted for conversations on religion.

The fearless, and indeed fierce manner, in which this man followed the example of the priesthood in denouncing the persons who had withdrawn from the Church of Rome, led to some of them rather hastily accepting in my name a challenge from him to defend the principles of Protestantism. They had arranged the place, the hour, the subject, before I was aware of it, and though I had an extreme repugnance to any communication with this person, I saw there was no way of escape, to the satisfaction of the people.

We met in the house of one of the Protestants, as he said he could not enter that of a convert or apostate. The subject was—*Prayer to saints*, and there were some thirty persons present.

I thought, from his manner, which was very constrained and nervous, but extremely respectful to myself personally, that he would have been as glad as myself, to have escaped the meeting.

I commenced by endeavoring to give a gentle, earnest, and solemn tone to the meeting, by a few words on the importance of salvation to all, and on the value and comfort of prayer to

our Father, and our God. I said that the life of a Christian, was a life of prayer. When the Almighty revealed himself to Ananias, and would express the conversion of Paul, He did so in the emphatic words, "Behold he prayeth!" When the Lord Jesus Christ would exhort his followers, it was in the simple words, "Watch unto prayer;" and when his apostle desired to see his disciples walking in the faith, he does so in the expressive words, "Pray without ceasing." The breath of the spiritual life is prayer, and just as the Levitical priest within the holy place, offered his incense till its perfumed vapor filled the sanctuary, above, beneath, around, so as that the very atmosphere he breathed, was an atmosphere of incense, so the child of God, the member of the "holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God, by Jesus Christ," 1 Peter ii. 5, is to sustain his spiritual life, breathing that which was typified by incense—breathing the atmosphere of prayer. I was very desirous to impress this spirit on all present, before our strife should commence. I said, that the soul that has lived in prayer, will need no arguments from me to induce to high thoughts of the sweetness, the comfort, the happiness of prayer. I added, that the more we value it, and the more important we feel it, in the very same degree is it important that we should pray aright, and especially that we should pray to Him "who heareth prayer,"—who hath commanded us to pray, and who, in asking for our prayers, declares himself a "jealous God, who will not give his glory to another." Our great principle is that prayer is one great element of that worship that belongs to God—that which both nature and revelation alike demand, as the homage of the creature to his Creator; and as such, it should be rendered to the Creator alone—not to the creature, but to the Creator alone. The transition from this to our subject was easy.

In the Church of Rome, a different principle has been adopted. She has recommended the offering of prayer, not to *the Creator alone* but to *the creature also*—not to God alone, but also to the angelic creation, and to the redeemed

in heaven—to the angels and the saints above. And I suggested that it would be a convenient mode of commencement if our friend would begin, by repeating the Litany to the saints. I said there was no necessity to repeat the whole; if he began with St. Lawrence and St. Vincent it would be enough.

The suggestion was acceptable to all, and he began, and most of the Roman Catholics present repeated it aloud with him.

St. Lawrence, pray for us.

St. Vincent, pray for us.

St. Fabian and St. Sebastian, pray for us.

St. John and St. Paul, pray for us.

St. Cosmos and St. Damian, pray for us.

St. Gervase and St. Protase, pray for us.

All ye Holy Martyrs, pray for us.

St. Sylvester, pray for us.

St. Gregory, pray for us.

St. Ambrose, pray for us.

St. Augustine, pray for us.

St. Jerome, pray for us.

St. Martin, pray for us.

St. Nicholas, pray for us.

All ye Holy Bishops and Confessors, pray for us.

All ye Holy Doctors, pray for us.

St. Anthony, pray for us.

St. Benedict, pray for us.

St. Bernard, pray for us.

St. Dominick, pray for us.

St. Francis, pray for us.

All ye Holy Priests and Levites, pray for us.

All ye Holy Monks and Hermits, pray for us.

St. Mary Magdalen, pray for us.

St. Agatha, pray for us.

St. Lucy, pray for us.

St. Cecilia, pray for us.

St. Catherine, pray for us.

St. Anastasia, pray for us.

All ye Holy Virgins and Widows, pray for us.

All ye Saints of God, make intercession for us.

The repeating of this Litany had a striking effect on the original Protestants present, who had never before heard it. They were for the most part earnest and religious men, who could not associate prayer in their minds with any one but God. They felt very fully that there was "one God, and one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus."—1 Tim. ii. 5. They knew well the words "If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous."—1 John ii. 2. And they believed him "able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them."—Heb. vii. 25. They were therefore not a little startled at a series of Mediators and Intercessors, whose very names they had never heard. They showed this in their manner.

I then remarked, amid the most profound attention, that our friend had recited a portion of the Litany, praying to a number of persons to pray for us; there were the names of men and the names of women—the names of persons of whom some of us had never heard, and of whom the most informed among us knew but little. Now I wished to ask how our friend knew that these persons were saints in heaven? We all felt of course, that if these persons are not saints in heaven, but devils in hell, or disembodied spirits any where else, it would be idolatrous to pray to them at all. And therefore I ask *how he knows* that they are really SAINTS IN HEAVEN?

He said at once, with confidence, that they were persons who lived in the faith of Jesus Christ, and died in the communion of the only true Church—the Church of Rome—that having lived holy lives, and done good works, and wrought miracles on earth, they are now rewarded by being translated into heaven. And being dear to God on account of their religion, their prayers and intercessions for us are effectual.

And therefore we pray to them in order to secure their interest and intercession with God in our favor.

I reminded him that this was not an answer to my question—that I had asked, *how he knew* that all these persons were SAINTS IN HEAVEN? The question was important, because it was held in the Church of Rome that when persons die, the wicked are cast into hell, and the righteous are sent to purgatory. Now if the righteous are sent to purgatory until they have suffered all that was due to their sins, how does our friend know that these persons are yet *out of Purgatory* or are yet *in heaven*?

This question seemed greatly to interest, and indeed to amuse our whole party, except our friend who was called to answer it. He was perfectly perplexed, but after some time he said that the saints never went to Purgatory—that they had merit enough, and sometimes more than enough for their own salvation, and to atone for all their sins, and that therefore it was their privilege, like the martyrs, to go at once to heaven when they die.

Still, I answered, my question remains, namely *how is it known* that these persons whose names are in the litany, are really saints? What authority do you give me for the fact? You tell me that these persons are saints. I ask—how do you know that? You tell me also that it is the privilege of saints to go at once to heaven, without staying in Purgatory, I ask—how do you know that? How has it been ascertained, that all these persons are now in heaven? The importance of this inquiry will be freely admitted, when it is considered that it must be confessed by all parties to be “a fond and vain thing” to pray to those who are not saints—to pray to those who are not in heaven. And, therefore, we ask—How has it been ascertained that all these persons are really saints? How has it been ascertained that all these persons are now in heaven? To answer this inquiry by saying—“They lived holy lives on earth, and, therefore, are now holy saints in heaven” is not sufficient; for we are liable to be deceived. We can only look to “the outward appearance; the Lord looketh to

the heart." We know that "the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: Who can know it?" We know that it is God only can "search the heart and try the reins." And, therefore, we feel, that it is He alone can know who are His saints. "The Lord knoweth them that are His." There is so much deception, so much false profession, so much hypocrisy in the world, that, though we may hope and wish, we yet can never assuredly know, who are the saints of God. It may be found, hereafter, that some shall have a throne in heaven whom we had believed to be in hell; and that some shall mourn in hell whom we had believed to be in heaven. We ask, then—How has it been ascertained, that Gervase and Protase—that Francis and Dominic—that all these monks and hermits—are really saints IN HEAVEN? How has it been ascertained that Agatha and Lucy—that Cecilia and Catherine—that all these virgins and widows—(the *married* women are all left out)—are really saints IN HEAVEN? We have strong and well-grounded suspicions, that many of these may never have entered heaven. We have strong and well-grounded suspicions that St. FRANCIS, who was one of the most awfully-blaspheming monks that ever trod the chambers of a monastery, may never have entered heaven. We have strong and well-grounded suspicions that St. DOMINIC, who founded that hateful institution, which has been "drunk with the blood of the saint and martyrs of Jesus"—the Inquisition—may possibly be in a worse region than heaven. We may well be allowed to doubt whether Archbishop Lawrence, who shook Ireland with rebellion—or whether Thomas à Becket, who disturbed England by faction—or whether Garnet, who hatched the Gunpowder Treason—we may well be allowed to doubt whether these men really are *saints*! And when we read the roll of the canonized saints of Rome—when we read there the names of men like these—men, whom all history and their own writings prove to have been blasphemers, or persecutors, or rebels, or traitors—we think we have some cause to suspect, that if we invoke, and confess, and pray to these men, we may

possibly, be invoking and confessing and praying to *damned souls in hell*, instead of *sainted spirits in heaven*.

This is a difficulty on the very threshold of this practice. The Church of Rome herself has recognized the reasonableness of this difficulty on our parts. It is, therefore, that in order to remove all doubts and suspicions upon the subject, it has been arranged in that Church, that the Pope or Bishop of Rome shall select those persons, who in the judgment of his court shall be regarded as the saints of God. He then canonizes those persons; that is, he enrolls their names in the scroll of the saints of heaven. And then, being thus canonized by him, all the members of the Church of Rome are to invoke them, and confess to them, and pray to them. If he refuses to canonize the candidate, then no man is to invoke or confess or pray to him; but if he determines to canonize the candidate, then every man is to invoke and confess and pray to him. This is the arrangement adopted in that Church, in order to obviate the doubts and suspicions we might be supposed to entertain. If we doubt that the blaspheming Francis is a saint, we are answered that the Pope has canonized him; and then our doubt is to vanish away, as smoke before the wind! If we suspect that the persecuting Dominic is not a saint, we are answered that the Pope has canonized him; and then our suspicion must fade away, like darkness before the sun! Thus all depends, according to this, upon the judgment of the Bishop of Rome—of a man like ourselves—of a man, who can not see into heaven one hair's breadth further than ourselves; and we are called on to peril our soul's salvation in this matter on the mere judgment of the Bishop of Rome!

His reply to this was given in a sullen and dogged spirit. It was simply, that His holiness the Pope, the successor of St. Peter, the rock on which the true Church was built, had canonized them—had declared them to be saints! He said no more.

And so, said I, you have nothing for it but the will of the Pope? Their names are not in the Holy Scriptures; and, therefore, you have not the word of God, but only the word of the Pope—the word of a mortal man for it!

He seemed very impatient and irritated at this ; stating, in a warm manner, that the Pope never canonized a saint without having good reasons for doing so—that every possible means were taken to prevent any mistake—that every inquiry was made—that every thing was done slowly and surely, and year by year—that time and opportunity were fully given for every inquiry, every doubt, and every objection—that the act of canonization was never completed without long delay, in which it was proved that there was no error in the writings of the person to be canonized—that, either in his life or after his death, miracles were known to be wrought by him—that all this was tried and tested in the most searching manner—that so severe was the test that an official was appointed, commonly called “the Devil’s Attorney,” whose special business it was to oppose every canonization, and to object to all the proofs of orthodoxy, and of sanctity, and of miracles—and that, finally, it was not till all was satisfactorily proved, that the saint was canonized by the Pope.

In reply to all this, I said, there was another view to be taken of this process of canonization, that very much altered its character. The fees—the legalized fees—of the process of canonization exceed some thousands of pounds ! These fees are to be paid to certain officials in whose hands the affair mainly rests ; and it is not likely—it is not in human nature—that they would throw any very serious impediments, beyond make-belief ones, in the way of their own receipt of these fees, which usually run to double the legal amount, an enormous sum in so poor a place as Rome ; and, especially, as sometimes the expenses of the process itself, which are enormous, all come into the possession of the officials and retainers of the Roman courts. [The work, “*Le Capelle Pontificie*,” etc., is the rubric, so to speak, for all the great ceremonies in which the Pope takes a part. It was said to have been written by the late Pope Gregory XVI. It was published in 1841, under the name of his chamberlain and favorite, Moroni. In this work it is stated that the canonization of St. Bernardine of Sienna cost 25,000 ducats of gold—that that of St. Bonaventure cost

27,000 ducats of gold—that that of St. Francis de Paola cost 70,000 scudi—and that of St. Francis of Sales 31,900 scudi, averaging from £10,000 to £12,000 each ! a prodigious sum in those days. It also states, that the law has legalized such fees ; as, to the prelate of the court, 150 scudi—to the writers' office, 175 scudi—to the office of the seal, 87 scudi—to the register, 176 scudi—to the office of dispatch, 60 scudi—to the bank of the Holy Spirit, 849 scudi, etc., etc. The scudo is worth about four shillings ; and it may well be believed that the officials who receive the fees on completing the canonization, will not throw unnecessary impediments in the way. The prospect of a canonization—a new saint—is a perfect “ God-send ” among them ; it is a little fortune to some of them.] It was customary with some kings and princes who knew this, as Charles III. of Spain, to propose a saint to be canonized almost every year ; not that he cared about the saint, but that he might have a handsome excuse for paying a large sum of money—a gentlemanly bribe—every year to the officials of the papal court, in order to maintain his influence in that quarter. He knew they would not quarrel with one who brought them so much wealth. This was common enough in past times. And besides this, a large number of saints have been canonized through the rivalry of the monastic orders, as the Dominicans, and Franciscans, and Jesuits. If the member of one order was canonized, then, in a spirit of rivalry, the other orders would propose the canonization of one of their number. And all this was encouraged by the officials of the court, for, whether the saint to be canonized was Dominican, or Franciscan, or Jesuit, the officials were always ready to receive the fees ; and, as might be expected from poor human nature, they would not be likely to oppose the completion of a canonization which brought them so much wealth. The money was good money from whatever order it came. This was a point so well understood, that then, as now, all persons felt that the first thing to be done, was to collect the adequate funds, as when *they* are prepared, there is no further difficulty of a serious nature to canonization. But the

truth is, that of late years very few canonizations take place; not more, I believe, than four or five for the last fifty years; and the reason is, that since the French Revolution and the wars of Napoleon, the immense estates of the monastic orders were confiscated, and the consequence is, that they have not so much to spare in canonizing new saints. At present they are obliged to send all over the world to collect subscriptions before they can proceed. It is from beginning to end an affair of money, and not of sanctity.*

He listened to this with the greatest interest, and seemed almost to forget the argument he had in hand. It appeared as if he was caught by the idea of the pecuniary corruptions insinuated against the court of Rome, for he was a great reformer in his way among the politicians of his neighborhood, and had constantly denounced in public the officials of the English Government, for their alleged bribery and corruption; it was with him a favorite subject in his speeches. By an accident I had used almost the very words he had himself frequently employed on such occasions; and he seemed to be quite taken with the subject, and to be thinking in his own mind that that was just the case of corruption he should like to expose.

He said nothing when I paused, so after a moment, I continued, and said, that the process of canonization was carried on through little comfortable commissions of cardinals, and other officials—that certain notices were posted on the churches, to notify that it was proposed to prove of some candidate for canonization that there was no error in all his writings—that he had possessed all the moral virtues—that he had possessed all the theological virtues—that he had possessed them in a heroical degree—that he wrought miracles either in his life or in his death—and that these several assertions would be maintained and proved in the church of some

* On the suppression of the monastic establishments in Naples, Napoleon Bonaparte took possession of their property, and realized no less than *twenty-five millions* of pounds sterling by the sale! so enormous had their wealth become.

convent at certain intervals of time. It will readily be believed that no one takes any trouble about it, except those specially interested. Sometimes the church is far away ; sometimes the proposed saint is a person whose name no one but the clergy remember. It is no man's interest and no man's business to oppose these assertions. Comfortable little commissions or committees of cardinals and officials meet and settle the whole, and receive the fees ; and all that the public then know is, that the Pope is to canonize the saint. A system like this can give us no confidence in the canonization of these saints. And, therefore, my question still remains—*How do you know* that these persons to whom you pray, and whose names were repeated in the litany, are really SAINTS IN HEAVEN. You have nothing for it but the word of the Pope who canonized the saint. And we have seen that none of us can depend much upon that.

He answered this rather rudely, saying, that he did not believe it—that though he knew very well that every where men were ready to fleece the poor out of their money, and then to job it among themselves—that though it was not improbable that there were some such persons at Rome, as every where else, yet he did not believe a word I had stated respecting the canonization of the saints. He was certain that the Pope, who was an holy man, and the cardinals, who were holy men, and the bishops, who were holy men, could not have taken part in any thing like that which I had described. Jesus Christ had promised never to leave his Church, and he would never desert the Pope, and the cardinals, and the bishops on such an occasion. He would not let them be carried away by a love of money, he would not let them be deceived by their officials. He therefore could not believe my statements, and was sure that whenever the Pope canonized the saint, then he or she was a saint, and it was lawful to pray to them.

It was very perceptible that the persons present were not satisfied with this sort of answer ; and as my object was principally so to argue as to influence them, without any expectation of making an impression on the mind of my opponent, I repeated my question, and added, addressing those present,

that they all had heard my inquiry—how it was ascertained that these persons are saints in Heaven? and that they also had heard his answer, namely, that they had the word of the Pope for it, and nothing more.

He here interrupted me, and said that at all events I could not deny that some of them were saints. Whatever might be said about St. Dominic, or St. Francis, or the others; yet certainly, the Blessed Virgin Mary, and Mary Magdalen, and St. Peter, and all the apostles were saints. It was impossible for me to deny that, and why may we not pray to them?

I felt at this moment very thankful at the course the conversation was taking, as I thought enough had been said on the foregoing point, and that it was time to turn to another, and he now gave it precisely the direction in which I had wished to turn it. I therefore said that I was glad to be able to agree with him so far as the Virgin Mary, and Mary Magdalen, and St. Peter and all the apostles were concerned—they were undoubtedly saints. They are described in Holy Scriptures as such, for in the times of the Holy Scriptures, all Christians, all believers, were called "Saints."

And why then, he asked, may we not pray to them?

Because, I replied, they can not hear our prayers. How can they, who are finite beings in heaven, hear the prayers of men on earth?

It is a fatal objection to the practice of the Church of Rome, that the departed saints are *finite* beings. It is in the nature of things impossible that such *finite* creatures should have cognizance of all the prayers and all the hearts of not only one or a few individuals, but of the thousands and millions of votaries who bow the knee to them. It should be remembered that the confession of sin, and the prayer for their intercession, are offered to these saints in every place throughout the whole world where the Mass is celebrated; that they are offered by every individual worshiper of that Church in the whole world; that these confessions and invocations and prayers, are offered up both in public worship and in private devotion; that whether in the wild forests of America, or in

the burning climate of Africa, or in the sunny regions of Asia, or in the civilized nations of Europe—whether among the negroes, the Indians, the savages, or the civilized—wherever there is a member of the Church of Rome, those confessions and invocations and prayers are made to these saints, and that too by thousands of persons at the very same instant of time; so that it must be absolutely impossible for the saints, unless they are omnipresent and omniscient, to hear and know these confessions and invocations and prayers. We feel that He who is the great, the immortal, the invisible, the only wise God “who is about our bed, and about our path, and spieth out all our ways,” and who “searcheth the heart, and trieth the reins,” and who knoweth all the “secret thoughts and intents of the heart,” inasmuch as “all things are naked and open before the eyes of Him with whom we have to do,”—we feel that He who is infinite, can, by his omnipresence and omniscience, hear, and see, and know every prayer of every heart. But we also feel that the departed saints, being but *finite* creatures, can not possibly hear or know the confessions, invocations and prayers that are made to them from so many millions of hearts, in so varied regions of the world, and at the same moment of time. And, therefore we argue that, even if we waived our former consideration—even supposing we were certified as to the persons who are the saints in light—even supposing we had the authority of Revelation, instead of the judgment of the Bishop of Rome, to assure us—the practice of confessing, and invoking, and praying to them would still be a vain invention, in consequence of their inability to hear us.

I then addressed myself directly to our friend, and said, I would put the question to him, and ask him to answer it before all present—How it was possible that the saints in Heaven could hear the prayers that are offered to them?

All present looked earnestly for his answer. He was fully conscious of this. He was confused and silent for some time. He said, at last, that he could not tell—that it was not to be

expected that he should be able to answer such a question, but, perhaps, the great God revealed it to them.

I reminded him that that overthrew the whole notion on which the doctrine of praying to the saints was founded. That doctrine was, that we ought not to approach God directly or at once—that as men approach an earthly sovereign, not directly or at once, but through his courtiers and favorites, that they may convey and commend our case to his clemency ; so men should approach God through the saints, who are his courtiers and favorites, and who can convey our prayers and commend our petitions to his favorable consideration. Now, this suggestion about God revealing your prayers to the saints overthrows all this doctrine ; for it appears that these saints, who are the courtiers and favorites of heaven, can not of themselves hear your prayers, and therefore, can not of themselves convey or commend your case to the clemency of God, unless God shall first reveal your prayers to them. And thus, the process is this—your prayers ascend first to God, and then God reveals them to the saint, and then the saint prays them back again to God ! Or to make this matter more plain, you offer a prayer to the Virgin Mary that she may present it to God for you. But she being finite, does not hear your prayer, or know you are praying to her. Your suggestion, then supposes that God who has seen you praying and heard your prayers, reveals it to the Virgin Mary, and then she reveals it back again to God ! And thus we find it is not the saints that present your prayers to God, but it is God who presents them to the saints, and then they present them back again to God ! The system is altogether unscriptural and wrong, for it makes God the Mediator between man and the saints, while it pretends to make the saints mediators between God and man. The truth of Scripture is—“There is one God, and one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus.”

This had an unmistakable effect on the parties present. And as our friend was perplexed and silent, a good deal of conversation passed among those present, one with another. The result seemed to me very satisfactory.

After a short time, however, in which our friend had a private conference with a companion, he said, that although he might not be able to explain every difficulty, yet he could see no harm in praying to the saints to pray for us—that they did no more than ask them as we would ask our friends to pray for us, and that there could be no harm in this. Do you not often ask your friends to pray for you?

I reminded him that in the “Confiteor” they went much further than this, for *they confess their sins* to Mary and the saints, and afterward *they pray* to Mary and the saints to pray for them, so that it was clear they did something more than ask the saints in the same way as we ask our friends to pray for us. Is there, I asked, one person among us *makes confession of all his secret sins to his friends*, and then asks them to pray for him? And if not, why say that you do no more to the saints than we do to our friends?

This appeal was at once responded to by all present, except one who had just entered and had heard neither the argument of my opponent nor the answer I had given. He was one held in very high estimation for his religiousness, being a brother of a confraternity or brotherhood lately settled a few miles distant—a sort of monk at a small convent. He was a tall, slight man, always dressed very like a priest, but with a coat whose skirts reached his heels, and he seemed a sly and smooth and insidious man, with a forced smile ever on his lips. Such at least was the impression he had created among the Protestants in the neighborhood; while among the Roman Catholics, though with some exceptions, he was regarded as a prodigy of learning as well as a model of piety. His manner of entering was marked with a courtesy that was almost servile, and yet with a smile that did not leave a pleasant impression on my mind. Perhaps, however, I had been prejudiced by the reports which I had previously heard.

Our conference seemed drawing to a close, as my opponent was unable or indisposed to say much more. He had begun with an overweening confidence, and he felt that he had failed in carrying the feelings or opinions of his hearers with him.

The converts from Rome whom he hoped to reclaim, seemed more confirmed than ever. And he therefore exhibited a more moderate and subdued manner.

I was about to conclude by recapitulating the arguments that had passed. I reminded them that my first question—namely, How he knew that these persons prayed to in the Litany of the Saints, were really saints in Heaven?—was not answered. And that my second inquiry—namely, How do the saints in Heaven hear the prayers and know the hearts of all their worshipers in all parts of the world?—was also unexplained. And I was going on with some general objections to the practice of praying to Mary and to the saints, as dishonoring to the mediation and intercession of Jesus Christ, when I was interrupted by the stranger. He made many apologies and asked a thousand pardons, and smiled most pleasantly upon all, before he spoke on the subject.

He said with extreme suavity, and with an expression that conveyed a sort of smile at my simplicity and ignorance in making such an objection—that the Church of Rome never enjoined or required her members to pray to Mary or the saints, but left it as freely as most Protestants themselves, to the feeling of her members to do in that respect as they thought fit.

I was somewhat amused at the self-satisfaction and self-complacency with which this was said, as if he was sure it would either silence me, or lead me to withdraw the objection. I said in reply, that I had frequently heard that statement before, but that it was from persons who did not know me, and I was sure he could hardly expect me to believe it. The facts of the case were known to every one, the practice was universal in the Church of Rome, and a man must shut his eyes if he would avoid seeing it.

He again replied in the same tone, in almost a patronizing and compassionating way, saying that he must be forgiven if he thought he might understand his own religion better than others—that Protestants very often make mistakes about the Catholic religion—that indeed many uttered calumnies

about her—that in fact the Council of Trent had only said that it was “good and profitable” to invoke the saints, and had never enforced it on any one, and that he could assure me, that if I or any Protestant present, were induced to enter the Church of Rome, we should not be required to pray to the saints. It was always left to the feeling and wishes of every individual for himself. There was no force or constraint put on any one, for, he added with a smile, you are left, as to this practice, altogether to the private judgment you admire so much.

I asked him to be so kind, if he had no particular objection, to repeat the Confiteor, or form of confession.

He immediately complied, “I confess to Almighty God, to the blessed Mary, ever Virgin, to Blessed Michael the Archangel, to Blessed John the Baptist,” etc.

I said that before any priest gave absolution to the penitent, he obliged him to make this confession, in which *he must confess to Mary and all the saints*, and then *pray to Mary and all the saints*, and until the penitent did this, you would not give him the absolution! Now as this absolution is held by you to be necessary to the communion of the Church here, and to salvation hereafter, your making it dependent on this confession, is certainly making praying to the saints a necessary thing.

He hesitated here, and evidently did not know how to answer me. It certainly was a difficulty, and he as certainly was unprepared for it. The company present showed that their feeling was not in his favor.

I continued, and reminded him that this same “Confiteor” is part and parcel of the mass or communion-service of his Church, and that there is no communion without it; and that no man can be admitted to receive the communion in the Church of Rome, unless this confiteor be first completed; that is, no man is received to the communion *until he has first confessed to Mary and all the saints, and then prayed to Mary and all the saints*; and this, you will admit, is very like making the practice necessary. Is it not a fact, I asked him,

that this confiteor is part and parcel of your communion service? Is it not in the service of the mass?

He acknowledged that it was so, but in a tone very different from the self-complacent and pleasing manner that had previously characterized him. I saw that the feeling of all present was entirely with me on the point, and I felt that my turn was now come; so I remarked that I hoped he would now admit that I knew something of his religion, or at least of the religion of the Church of Rome, and that he would allow that the Church of Rome did something more than say that prayer to the saints was "good and profitable," inasmuch as she made it *essential before giving absolution, and before admission to her communion.*

He said no more, but quietly rose and left the house. He beckoned to my opponent, who immediately followed him. I therefore said a few words to make the conclusion of our subject profitable; to the effect that we should find the Lord Jesus Christ far more loving and compassionate and sympathizing than any saint—far more ready and willing to hear our prayers and receive our petitions than any saint; and that our best course was to make our way to Him, and instead of stopping to ask Mary, or entreat Peter, or pray Paul, to go at once to Jesus himself—to cast ourselves at his feet—to tell Him all our sins, our sorrows, our shame, our need, and ask of Him the love and forgiveness we require. He has Himself graciously promised that He will cast out none that come to Him. His words are, "Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out."

We soon separated.

THE WORSHIP OF THE SAINTS.

The Origin of this Practice in the Classic Mythology of Rome—The Contrast between False and True Religion in the matter of Mediation—The Opinions of learned Heathens—The Worship of Dulis—Various groups of Texts of Scripture on this Practice—The Argument in its Favor from its supposed Humility—The Argument distinguishing between Redemption and Intercession—This Practice withdraws the Devotion from Christ.

THERE are several circumstances, as to time and place and persons, that must greatly effect the method of conducting controversy. The halls of a university—the drawing-room of the refined—the library of the learned—the workshop of the artisan—the cottage of the peasant, all require a different process of reasoning and illustration, and there is nothing more certain than that the mode of speaking to a sincere and religious mind, must be very different from that of dealing with one, that is careless upon the subject, or enters on it either as an intellectual conflict, or in the spirit of a partisan. In reference to the practice of praying to the saints, I have already described a conversation with one who was unfeignedly religious, however mistaken; and another with one who acted throughout in a spirit of factious partisanship. There are many other ways of dealing with the subject, which it would be unpardonable to omit here, as I have often used them, varying them according to the character of the parties with whom I may have conversed.

I have frequently found among Roman Catholics of intelligence and general reading, especially those who have had a classical education, that the origin and growth and history of any practice had considerable interest—a peculiar interest when the practice was traceable to the opinions and practices

of classic times. Such persons in the Church of Rome, are often better able to appreciate an argument derivable from such sources, than one founded on the clearest statements of Holy Scripture. They are perhaps acquainted with the former, they are very probably unacquainted with the latter.

In nothing have I found this more successful than in the matter of praying to the saints.

I have often argued, that the object of revealed religion, was to overthrow every false religion—every mythology however ancient. The pagan or heathen world had a mythology with numerous gods and demi-gods, varying in every country and every clime; Asia, Africa and Europe had all their different systems, and though perhaps having a common origin, according as conquests and migrations intermingled diverse people of diverse religions, they became more or less modified, till they were innumerable in their phases. I have also urged, that the great distinctive peculiarity of Christianity, as contrasted with heathenism, is this:—Christianity teaches “there is **ONE** God, and **ONE** MEDIATOR between God and man;” while heathenism taught, there were *many gods* and *many mediators* between gods and men. The classic mythology of Greece and of Rome held the existence of *Dii Majores*, superior divinities, and *Dii Minores*, inferior divinities. It was imagined that the former class possessed all power and authority, and that the latter acted as mediators between them and mortals; so that it was a part of the mythology of the age, that there were *many gods*, and *many mediators*. Now the revelation of heaven, contained in the Holy Scriptures, sets forth, in opposition to this, that “there is *one God*, and *one Mediator* between God and man.” The apostle Paul draws the contrast in the following striking words—“There is none other God but one; for though there be that are called gods [that is *nominal* gods], whether in heaven or in earth (as there be gods many, and lords many), but to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by Him.”—1 Cor. viii. 5, 6. Here is the point of contrast between

heathen mythology and Christian revelation. Heathenism admitted **MANY GODS**, and **MANY LORDS**, or mediators, while Christianity admits only **ONE GOD**, and **ONE LORD**, or mediator.

We charge the Church of Rome with having abandoned this distinctive peculiarity of Christianity, and with having thus far apostatized into the idolatry of heathenism. We do not charge her with having many *gods*, but we charge her with having many *mediators*. Instead of holding the single mediation of Jesus Christ, she has a lengthy roll or calendar of saints—whom she herself has canonized, and sets forth as mediators and advocates “between God and man,” for the purpose of bearing our wants and prayers before God, and pleading with Him in our behalf.

The answer made to this, is generally a very indignant denial; it is strongly and emphatically denied; it is asserted that no saint is regarded as a god or a goddess: It was the system among the heathen nations—that which was the classic mythology of the Roman Empire—the empire which has since become the field or platform of the Roman Church—had recognized an innumerable band of gods and demi-gods; yet they regarded them as in reality deities, more or less potent, to be appeased or pacified; while in the Church of Rome, the notion of any divinity resident in any saint was altogether and expressly discarded; she holds the unity of the godhead as strongly as ourselves, and there was no charge she would reject more determinedly than that of having deified the saints, and thus, like the heathen, multiplied their gods.

In reply to this, I have stated, that I was quite aware that the saints were not gods or goddesses, and were not regarded as such, or believed to be such in the Church of Rome—that if they were believed to be such, there would be in that belief an ample justification of the religious worship which is rendered to them—that *in that case* it would only be a matter of course, that they should be worshiped; but that my objection was that when they were regarded as only dead men and dead women, whose bodies were mouldering in the grave, waiting

for the day of resurrection, and whose souls were supposed to be in heaven; that *as such*, a religious worship so great and reverential as praying and confessing and making vows to them, should be offered to them. This I have said, was identical, not in name, but in reality with the practice of the classic mythology of the Roman Empire, and was so far an apostasy from the faith of revealed religion.

This apostasy of the Church of Rome will be more apparent, when we reflect that the character of the mediation which Romanism ascribes to its saints is precisely the same as that which heathenism ascribed to its demi-gods. It was believed among the heathen, that when a man became illustrious for his deeds, his conquests, his inventions, or aught else that distinguished him as a benefactor of mankind, he could be canonized and enrolled among the inferior divinities. He thus became a mediator, whose sympathies with his fellow-men, on one hand, and whose merits with the gods, on the other, fitted him for the mediatorial office of bearing the prayers and the wants of mortals to the presence of the gods. The heathen philosophers, Hesiod, Plato, and Apuleius, all thus speak of those persons. The last named philosopher says, "They are *intermediate* intelligencers, by whom our prayers and wants pass unto the gods. They are the mediators between the inhabitants of earth, and the inhabitants of heaven, carrying thither our prayers, and drawing down their blessings. They bear back and forward prayers from us, and supplies from them; or they are those that explain between both parties, and who carry our adorations, etc." This was the creed of heathenism, and in nothing but the name does it differ from the corresponding creed of Romanism. When the Church of Rome finds members of her communion, whom she regards as signally pious, or illustrious for supposed miraculous powers, she holds that they may be canonized and enrolled among her saints—that then they can mediate between God and man—that they have sufficient favor or influence with God to obtain compliance with our prayers, and therefore they are fitting objects to whom our confessions, invocations and prayers may

be offered ; or as she expresses it in her creed, "that the saints reigning with Christ are to be honored and invoked, and that they offer prayers to God for us." The principle of heathen Romanism, and the principle of Christian Romanism are one and the same, the only difference is in the detail of the names. And the origin of this practice is demonstrative of this ; for when it was found, after the establishment of Christianity, in the times of Constantine, when the great object of the court was to promote uniformity of religion, that many of the heathen would outwardly conform to Christianity, if allowed to retain in private their worship of their guardian or tutelary divinities, they were so allowed, merely on changing the names of Jupiter to Peter, or Juno to Mary, still worshiping their old divinities under new names, and even retaining old images that were baptized with Christian names. This is apparent in the writings of those times, and was thought a measure of wisdom—a stroke of profound policy, as tending to produce a uniformity of religion among the unthinking masses. The invocations of Juno have been transferred to Mary ; the prayers to Mercury have been transferred to Paul. We see not how the substitution of the names of Damian or Cosmo for those of Mercury or Apollo, or how the substitution of the names of Lucy or Cecilia for those of Minerva or Diana, can alter the idolatrous character of the practice. In some instances they have not even changed the names, and Romulus and Remus are still worshiped in Italy, under the more modern names of St. Romulo and St. Remigio. The simple people believe them to have been two holy bishops. I have myself witnessed this near Florence, and even Bacchus is not without his votaries, under the ecclesiastical name of St. Bacco ! The principle and the practice of papal Rome are identical with the principle and practice of pagan Rome. Every argument to justify one may be equally urged to justify or extenuate the other. And if the principle and practice of pagan Rome are to be denounced as idolatrous, I see not why the very same principle and practice in papal Rome should not be denounced as idolatrous likewise.

To this point, they replied that the systems were not the same, that in pagan Rome they regarded these persons as gods or as demi-gods, as possessing at least some portion of the divinity, and they worshiped them and sacrificed to them as such ; whereas in Papal or Christian Rome, they regarded the saints as men and women, who were the friends and favorites of God, as unable to assist us, or do any thing for us, except to exert their influence with God by praying on our behalf—that as such the Church of Rome never paid *divine* worship to the saints, but only an *inferior* or *lesser* worship, called *δουλεία*—the worship of *λατρεία* being rendered to God alone, that of *δουλεία* being rendered to the saints, while an intermediate worship called *ἐπερδουλεία* was rendered to the Virgin Mary.

My reply to this has always been that my argument has not been an argument about *names* but about *things*. If the homage or worship paid to the Christian saints be identical in its nature and character to that paid to the heathen demi-god, it is about the thing and not the name we should argue. But since the question has been raised as to the name or kind of worship—as to rendering to the saints that kind and degree of religious worship called *δουλεία*, it was the very same in kind, and degree, with that which the heathen rendered to their demi-gods. The Apostle Paul explicitly states this ; for describing the worship of the classic heathen, before their conversion to Christianity, he says “when ye knew not God, ye paid the service of *δουλεία* to them that by nature are no gods.” Gal. iv. 8. This is a clear and decisive statement, showing that while the Galatians knew not the true God, they rendered to their false gods, to those who were not gods by nature, the service of *δουλεία*, the very service which the Church of Rome avows that she pays to the saints who are not gods. The very words of the Apostle’s description of the heathen state of the Galatians, describe with precision the actual state of the Church of Rome, “ye pay *δουλεία* to them who by nature are no gods.” *

* The following well-known prayer embodies the three species or degrees of worship together :—

To this I am not acquainted with any reply. It effectually silences all those who attempt to justify the system on the plea of giving only the service of *Dulia* to the saints. It only identifies the practice of Papal Rome with the practice of Pagan Rome, as being paid to those who are not gods by nature.

But while the Church of Rome has thus departed from that which is the great distinctive mark of Christianity, as distinguishing it from the classic mythology, it has also adopted herein a practice in direct repugnance to the whole language of Holy Scripture. It is impossible, owing to the multitude of Scriptures bearing on this point, to enter on any detail, and I shall, therefore, endeavor to group them—to classify them into certain groups of texts, which will sufficiently intimate the general character of all. Each group becomes a distinct argument in itself.

1. The first class comprehends those passages which expressly deny the mediation of any other than One—even Jesus Christ. I have already referred to that place, where we read—"There is none other God but one; for though there be, that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth (as there be gods many and lords many), but to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by Him."—1 Cor. viii. 5, 6. This asserts, that as there is only *one God*, so there is only *one Lord* or Mediator; as it is expressed in the place—"There is one God and one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus."—1 Tim. ii. 5. It is argued that although this place asserts, there is "one Mediator," yet that this does not imply that there may not be many more mediators besides—that the assertion of "one

"Jesus, Mary, Joseph, I give you my heart and my soul.

Jesus, Mary, Joseph, assist me in my last agony.

Jesus, Mary, Joseph, I breathe out my soul to you in peace."

To this prayer is affixed an Indulgence of one hundred days, by a Bull issued in 1807, and in it are the three degrees of worship—*Latria* to Jesus; *Dulia* to Joseph; *Hyperdulia* to Mary! It is rather hard for a simple man to distinguish such niceties.

Mediator" is not necessarily an exclusion of many others. But any man, who reads the words,—“There is one God, and one Mediator between God and man, the Man Christ Jesus,” will perceive, that if the phrase “one Mediator” is to be explained as allowing the existence of many other mediators, then the phrase, “one God,” must be also explained as allowing the existence of many other gods. He will at once perceive that the true purport of the passage is, that as there is but “one God,”—so there is but “one Mediator,” and that Mediator is Jesus Christ. The same remark is applicable to the words—“If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and He is the propitiation for our sins.”—1 John ii. 1. It is the intention of such language to convey, that Jesus Christ is the only Advocate. There is no allusion to Mary or Lucy or Cecilia. There is no mention of Damian, or Protase or Thaddeus. There is one Advocate—one Lord—one Mediator—even as there is one God.

2. The second class of Scripture texts consists of those which ascribe the blessings and privileges of the Gospel, as flowing to the Church, through the mediation of Jesus Christ. We read, that “through Him we have access by one Spirit unto the Father.” And again, “Now in Christ Jesus, ye who were afar off, are made nigh by the blood of Christ—Eph. ii. 13, 18. And again, “according to the eternal purpose, which He purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord, in whom we have boldness and access with confidence, by the faith of Him.”—Eph. iii. 11. And again, “We have peace with God, through Jesus Christ our Lord, by whom we have access by faith.”—Rom. v. 3. And again—“Ye are to offer spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.”—1 Peter, i. 5. This class of texts might be extended to any length, for they are innumerable. And their value in our present argument is, that they set forth Jesus Christ as the mean—the person mediating between us and our God—the Mediator between God and man, through whom we have access, in whom we are accepted, by whom our prayers are presented; while at the same time, there is not the remotest allusion to any others—not the faintest im-

plication that there are any others, through whom we can have access, or by whom our prayers can be made acceptable. The truth involved in them all is, that which Jesus Christ has Himself proclaimed—"I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no man can come unto the Father but by Me."—John xiv. 16.

3. There is a third class of Scriptures, that bears strongly on this point. It embraces those which expressly mention that it is through Jesus Christ our prayers are to be offered to the throne of grace. His own words are—"I go to My Father; and whatsoever ye shall ask the Father *in My name*; that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask any thing *in My name*, I will do it."—John, xiv. 13, 14. Again—"In that day ye shall ask me nothing. Verily, verily, I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall ask the Father *in My name*; He will give it you. Hitherto have ye asked nothing *in My name*; ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full."—John, xvi. 23, 24. And again—"In that day ye shall ask *in My name*; and I say not unto you, that I will pray the Father for you."—John, xvi. 26. This class of Scriptures is of great importance in this question; for they prove that it is not only in the matter of redemption, but in the matter of intercession, that the Lord Jesus Christ is the Mediator. And coming from the gracious lips of Jesus Himself, they affix the promise of hearing and answering prayer only to such prayers as are offered in the name of Jesus Christ. There is no promise of hearing or answering any prayer, that may be offered through any other mediator, save Him, who is the "one Mediator between God and man." If offered in his name, we have the promise that our prayers shall be heard and answered. If offered in the name of any angel or saint, we have no promise whatever, that the prayer shall be heard or answered.

4. But this suggests a fourth class of Scriptures, involving another argument. I allude to those in which religious worship is stated to have been offered to angels, and to have been refused by them. I allude to the words—"And I fell at his

feet to worship him. And he said unto me, See thou do it not; I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus; worship God; for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."—Rev. xix. 10. And again—"I John saw these things and heard them. And when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which showed me these things. Then saith he unto me, See thou do it not; for I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the saying of this book: worship God." Here was John so overpowered with the glory of the angel, that he prostrated himself to worship before his feet; and the angel, at once and with all earnestness, forbids and rebukes it. And not only so, but assigns as a reason, that he was himself but the servant of God, who alone was to be worshiped; and therefore to each rebuke he adds the solemn warning—"Worship God." So keenly is this rebuke of the angel felt by some of the advocates of the Church of Rome, that they have cut it out of their catechism—urging the action of John in worshiping the angel as a proof that we may, after his example, likewise worship the angels; and then carefully suppressing the answer of the angel, which censured and rebuked him!* In the whole history of the Church there has never been so wilfully perverted and falsely handled a Scripture as this; and in such a daring abuse of the Word of God the Church of Rome has had no rival, but on that occasion when the devil quoted Scripture on the mount.

5. But while these Scriptures illustrate our position in reference to the angels, there is another class that illustrates it in reference to the saints. I allude to the place, "As Peter was coming in, Cornelius met him, and fell down at his feet, and worshiped him: but Peter took him up, saying, Stand up; I myself also am a man."—Acts, x. 25, 26. And again: "The priest of Jupiter, which was before their city, brought

* This occurs in the Catechism published by the celebrated Dr. Doyle, for Ireland.

oxen and garlands unto the gates, and would have done sacrifice with the people. Which, when the apostles, Barnabas and Paul, heard of, they rent their clothes, and ran in among the people, crying out, and saying, Sirs, why do you these things? we also are men of like passions with you, and preach unto you that you should turn from these vanities unto the living God, which made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein."—Acts, xiv. 13–15. Here we find that both Peter and Paul—whose names are in the Roman Litany as persons to whom prayers are to be made, and in honor of whom the sacrifice of the Mass is to be offered, did refuse both the prayer and the sacrifice. And they both assign the same argument for their refusal—Peter saying, "I myself also am a man," and Paul saying, "We are men of like passions with you;" showing that the fact of their being men and not God, disentitled them to all religious worship. And feeling as we do, that it was more rational to pray to them when on earth, and when therefore they were able to hear, than to pray to them when in heaven, and where they are not able to hear us—feeling this, and remembering that the saints themselves, while they lived, refused the religious honors that were tendered them, we conclude that they would still refuse, if they could know it, the confessions, and invocations and prayers that are made, and the sacrifices of Masses that are offered to their honor in the Church of Rome.

6. There is a sixth class of Scriptures—the last to which I shall refer, as illustrating the doctrine of our Church. We invariably, in the Church of England, offer our prayers to God: and we justify this, by that large class of Scriptures, which contains the prayers and invocations of holy men, in all ages of the Church of God. All the prayers offered by Moses, by Abraham, by Hannah, by David, by Solomon, by Daniel, by Jonah, by the apostles, we find, without one solitary exception, offered neither to angels or saints, but only to God. And in the Psalms of David, he repeats his determination to invoke God, and God alone. "As for me," he says, "I will call on the Lord," and "we will call on Thy name," and "I will call

on Him as long as I live." In innumerable places in the book of Psalms the very word "invoco"—"to invoke," is used in the Vulgate or Romish Scriptures, and in every case it is an invocation of God, and there is not a single or solitary instance of its being made to angels or saints. The only case that looks like it, is in the parable of Dives and Lazarus; there the rich man in the torments of hell offers a prayer to Abraham. This is the only example. The only example of a man praying to a saint, is the example of a damned spirit in hell! the only example of a man praying to a saint, is the example of a prayer that was refused! and yet the Church of Rome, rejecting the examples of such holy ones, as Abraham, and David, and Daniel, and Paul, and Peter, selects as the model to imitate, this solitary example of a man praying to a saint from the torments of hell!

I have thus grouped these six classes of texts—each group in itself supplying a distinct argument against the practice of the Church of Rome. The whole collectively form an insurmountable barrier against our compliance with her practice. We dare not abandon the mediation of Christ to have recourse to the mediation of saints. We can not—we dare not pluck the mediatorial crown from the brow of Jesus, to place it on the brow of His saints. And as for making the saints mediators along with Him and beside Him—as for making them sharers or partners or rivals with Him in that glorious office—I feel that we should do Him a less dishonor in dethroning Him altogether, than in raising so many partners to the throne; I feel that we should do Him a less dishonor in renouncing Christianity altogether, than in exalting this heathenish idolatry beside Christianity. The idol of Dagon could stand in peace in his temple while it was alone: the Ark of Jehovah could rest in peace in its Tabernacle while it was alone; but when once they were brought together, the anger of Jehovah was kindled—the silence of the temple of Dagon was broken, and the idol was shattered in pieces. The idolatry of heathenism shall stand till the Lord's time; the worship of Christianity shall stand forever; but if heathenism and Christianity are to

be dove-tailed into each other—if they are to be so amalgamated as to make but one religion in one temple (as is done in the Church of Rome)—then it is practically to place Satan side by side with Christ upon the throne: the deepest and the blackest dishonor that man could perpetrate against his God.

I have, as occasioned offered, pressed an argument against praying to the saints, based on each separate class, or group of these Scriptures, and my opponents have more or less endeavored to weaken their force, though not unfrequently the natural conclusion deducible from them has been fairly and candidly admitted. I have, then, usually called attention to the whole of these grouped together, as forming, like the completeness of an architectural pile, a powerful argument affecting the mind by its general bearing, as illustrative of the general tone of Christianity.

To all this, they have often presented two replies.

They first argue, that so far from being a dishonor done to Christ and his mediation and intercession, it has the opposite tendency. It exhibits humility, as showing them to be so lowly and humble as that they are unwilling to come directly into his high and holy presence, and presuming only to approach him through his saints. They argue that it is like approaching an earthly sovereign, not directly to his person and presence, but through his favorites and courtiers—that thus instead of being a dishonor done to Christ, it is rather an evidence of humility in themselves.

To this we reply in the words of Holy Scriptures: "Let no man beguile you of your reward in a *voluntary humility and worshiping of angels*, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind."—Col. ii. 18. From these words, it would appear that this practice was attempted to be justified in the very beginnings of Christianity, under this very same plea of humility; that men arguing from the practice of the courts of earth, assumed an analogous practice to the courts in heaven, and that the Holy Scripture in this place warns us against this as "a voluntary humility," and then adds: "Which things indeed have a *show of*

wisdom in will-worship and *humility*," verse 23; not the reality of a Christian humility, but the mere appearance—the show of it! And this was precisely the view taken of this text in the primitive Church. Theodoret, who lived in the fourth century, comments on these words thus: "Because some persons commanded men to worship angels, the apostle commands the contrary, namely, that they should adorn their words with the remembrance of the Lord Christ, and present their thanksgivings to God even the Father, through him, and not through angels. The Council of Laodicea following this rule, and desiring to extirpate this inveterate disease, made a law that men should not pray to angels, and leave the Lord Jesus Christ." He says again: "This vice continued in Phrygia and Pisidia for a long time; and for this reason the council assembled at Laodicea, the chief city of Phrygia, forbade them by a law to pray to angels;" and Theodoret states that they "practiced this under *pretense of its humility*, saying, that God was invisible, inaccessible, and incomprehensible, and that it was fitting that we should approach him through the means of the angels." It is a humility that injures and dishonors Christ. If there be one trait in His character, if there be one jewel in His diadem, more conspicuous than another, it is His loving-kindness and compassion, evidencing his willingness to hear and receive us. Every act he performed—every suffering he endured—every word he uttered, is an evidence of his willingness to hear and receive us. There are his many promises; there are his many invitations; there are his many entreaties, to induce us to come to Him; and they all are so many evidences of his willingness to hear and receive us. He has exhibited Himself in every conceivable way, that could evidence his accessibleness—his willingness to be approached by the poorest and humblest sinner. He has shown this to such a degree, that we can not hesitate for a moment in stating, that no man can rightly peruse the Holy Scriptures without the fullest conviction that Jesus Christ is at all times, and under all circumstances, infinitely more willing to hear our petitions than any of the angels or saints can

be, to be the bearers of them. And, therefore, we conclude that this plea of humility, while it is only "a show of humility," is really throwing a doubt on the invitations—putting an affront upon the compassions, and an insult upon the tenderness of Jesus Christ.

The second answer which they urge, and indeed very frequently urge, against the inference from all the language of Scripture is, that though applicable as proving Jesus Christ to be the only mediator of redemption, they do not prove him to be the only mediator of intercession. And, therefore, when it is proved that "there is one God, and one mediator between God and man," the words having reference to Christ, as the *mediator of redemption*, do not exclude the saints as *mediators of intercession*.

The rejoinder to this case is clear. It is evident that this objection assumes that when the Holy Scriptures state, "There is one God, and one Mediator between God and man," they do not refer to a mediator of intercession; whereas the context proves beyond all question, that in that very place the reference is to Jesus Christ as a mediator of intercession, as well as a mediator of redemption. The whole passage is as follows: "I exhort, therefore, that first of all *supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks* be made for all men: for kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus: who gave Himself, a ransom for all, to be testified in due time."—1 Tim. ii. 1-6. The subject-matter of this exhortation is "*supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks*." And it encourages us to these exercises and privileges, in the assurance that we have a mediator in Jesus Christ, through whom they shall be presented unto God, and by whom they shall be acceptable, as He has laid down His life as a ransom for us. And yet, though "*supplications, prayers, intercessions*"

and giving of thanks," are expressly the subject of this Scripture, the advocates of Rome would endeavor to persuade us that the Lord Jesus Christ is not here described as the Mediator of intercession!

And this brings this subject to its true conclusion. In the religion of revelation, there is no one truth more certain, as there is none more comforting, than the mediation and intercession of Jesus Christ. It is stated that he is "the High Priest of our profession," and in that capacity he is ever in the presence of the Almighty, making intercession in behalf of his people; there He ever presents them before the throne of grace, He pleads in their behalf, He has suffered for them, He has poured forth his blood for them, He has died on the cross for them, and now in the heaven of heavens, He presents His bleeding sacrifice, His spotless work, His everlasting righteousness, His infinite merits, His effectual intercession for them. It is written, "He is able to save to the uttermost, all that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them." And then, there is love—such love in the depth of His heart, for those whom He came to seek and to save—a love, the length, and breath, and depth, and height, of which no man can comprehend—a love that like His own nature is infinite; and with such a High Priest pleading for us, and such love yearning toward us, it seems a cold and sad return on our parts, to look on all that prevailing intercession and all that wondrous love, as inefficient, so that we must go seek the intercession and depend on the love of supposed saints, who know nothing of us, have never died for us, and have never shown any love toward us. St. Chrysostom has a beautiful passage on this subject. In allusion to the woman of Canaan he says, "God is always near us: if we entreat a man, we must inquire what he is doing, and whether he is asleep or at leisure, and perhaps the servant gives no answer. But with God there is nothing of all this, wherever you go and call on Him, He hears. With Him there is no want of leisure, no mediator, no servant to keep you off. Mark the wisdom of the woman of Canaan, she does not pray to James

she does not beseech John, she does not fly to Peter, but she breaks through them all saying, I want no mediator, but taking repentance as my spokesman, I come to the fountain itself; it was for this He left the heavens, it was for this He became flesh, it was that such as I might have boldness to speak to Himself; I want no mediator with Him. Have mercy upon me." This is the true spirit of the Gospel. The system of the Church of Rome teaching her members to trust to the intercession of the saint, is an injury to the intercession of Jesus Christ as if she thought this required their assistance; and her teaching her members to rest on the love of the saints, implies a want of faith in the infinite love of him "who hath loved us and given himself for us." And it has the unhappy effects of drawing away the mind and heart from Christ, and directing prayer and praise, and thanksgiving, and love, and worship, to the saints instead of to the Saviour—to the creature instead of the Creator. St. Paul tells us this was the characteristic of the heathen Romans, that "they served the creature more than the Creator."

And it is well worthy of remark, that it was this characteristic of the ancient heathenism of Rome that it is said by modern Roman Catholic divines to have been the cause of saint-worship not being permitted among primitive Christians. Delahogue allows this in his work, forming as it does the class book of Maynooth. It is a fact on which there is no question among the learned of all Churches—it is admitted by the ablest divines of the Church of Rome, that prayer to the saints was altogether unpracticed and unknown among the Christians of the early ages; and as the evidence of this fact is so clear and strong as an argument against this novel practice of the Church of Rome, the divines of that Church are obliged to explain the absence or omission of this practice in the best and purest time, by telling us that praying to the saints was not countenanced lest it should seem to be identified with the praying to the demi-gods—lest the heathen and Christian practice should seem alike. They tell us that on this account prayers to saints were not permitted till heathenism was abol-

ished ; namely, for the first three centuries after Christ, and that it was not introduced till Christianity was established under Constantine. Whatever may be thought of the ingenuity of this excuse, it is a full admission that it was no part or practice of the Church of Christ in its earliest and purest ages.

NOTE.—They sometimes argue from Rev. v. 8. They argue here that this vision represents the saints *in heaven*, offering up the prayers of the saints *on earth*. The answer to this is, that it is by no means clear that this is the meaning of the passage at all. The parties are *the four beasts* and *the four-and-twenty elders*, which, when more carefully rendered, will be the four living ones and the four-and-twenty presbyters;—the four living ones being the emblems or symbols of the four great empires of the earth; and the presbyters being the officials or ministers of the Church on earth: so that the vision rather represents the triumph of Christianity, when the four empires of earth, once pagan persecutors, shall be converted; and with the ministry of Christ's Church shall present their prayers, which will then be the prayers, not of pagans, but of Christians—not of unbelievers, but of saints before the throne of God. The similar passage on earth in Rev. viii. 3, has a similar solution. The prayers of “saints” are the prayers of *Christians* on earth, who are always called “saints” in the New Testament; and these prayers are here described as presented to God by the great angel—by Him who is the Great High Priest of the Church.

THE VIRGIN MARY.

The Original of the Worship of Mary—The Symbols of Creation among the Heathen—Whether worshiped as a Goddess or a Woman—Inferior Kinds of Worship—Whether her Merits are pleaded with God—Whether She is prayed to for her own Power—The Sabbatine Privilege—Her Omnipotence according to St. Alphonso and St. Bernardine—She is placed in some Devotional Books on an equality with Christ—In others above Him, as being more Merciful, and Prayers more acceptable through her than through Him—These Devotional Books are authorized, while the Holy Scriptures are suppressed—The Language of Holy Scripture as to the Virgin Mary.

THE distinctive characteristic of the Church of Rome at the present day, is the worship of the Virgin Mary; not that it is a modern invention, but that it has of late years assumed a prominence, all-pervading and all-absorbing, which it had not known before. I once remarked to an ecclesiastic in the city of Rome, that it appeared to me that *the religion of Christ*, as received in that city, would be more fitly called *the religion of Mary*. He replied, approving the sentiment, and adding that every year it was becoming more and more developed as—**THE RELIGION OF MARY!**

It is important, therefore, that we should understand something of the nature and extent of this worship.

In almost all the devotional books of the Church of Rome the Virgin Mary is styled—**THE MOTHER OF GOD**, and in most of the pictures and images in the churches she is crowned and sceptered and enthroned as—**THE QUEEN OF HEAVEN**. These titles are so frequently given to her, that they are regarded as distinctively belonging to her, as is that of—**God of heaven**, to the Almighty himself.

The origin of this is far deeper than a mere corruption of Christianity. It has its roots as deep and as universal as

human nature. It originated in a symbol—a symbol universal among the nations in the darkness of heathenism. The ideal of the creative or productive power was intimately connected in their minds with the idea of maternity. It was a power that conceived and brought forth, and in ages in which it was thought necessary to represent the creator or creative power under a symbol, it was not unnatural to adopt the symbol of a WOMAN, as developing this idea of maternity. Accordingly, in almost all the mythologies of ancient times, whether in the east or in the west, there was a female divinity—a goddess whose maternity was worshiped. In one mythology it was Astarte of the Assyrians; in another it was Ashtoreth of the Sidonians; in another it was Bawaney of the Hindoos. In the classic mythology of Greece and of Rome, eclectic as it was, there was a Venus adopted from one, and a Juno from another. It is said, that the image of Diana of Ephesus was that of a female, from whose body, in every part, there seemed to be issuing all the various animals of creation, symbolizing the conception and production of all things. The Egyptians on one hand, and the Etruscans on the other, had their Isis, the same symbol, a female divinity whom they regarded as “the mother of the gods.”

Even the Scandinavian mythology had its Freigha; and of the two great systems of religion that held possession of the platform of the Roman Empire, namely, Judaism, and the classic mythology, the latter styled its Juno, the “Queen of Heaven,” and the former, when corrupted by the admixture of the heathenism around it, was charged by the prophet Jeremiah, with having also its “Queen of Heaven.” Jer. vii. 18, and Jer. xlv. 17. This divinity in all the systems had a mysterious and indefinite position. Her power and province were left very much to the imaginations of her votaries; it would seem as if it was an element congenial with all natural mythologies, as answering some impulse or feeling in the fallen and natural heart, that there should be the embodiment of some such idea—the symbol of the creation or production of all things, enthroned among the gods, as the Queen of Heaven.

Now the argument against the Church of Rome is, that she has adopted that element of heathenism—that instead of imitating the prophet Jeremiah in denouncing this worship among the Jews—instead of following the apostle Paul in opposing it among the Gentiles—instead of fighting against this tendency of the people of the Roman Empire, she rather encouraged it; and though perhaps with the zealous but ill-regulated desire to induce a more easy and extended profession of Christianity, she allowed the easterns to accept the Virgin, instead of Astarte—their former queen of heaven, and permitted the westerns to receive Mary, instead of Juno, the queen of heaven they had previously worshiped. It is not the least striking fact connected with this, that the two favorite titles ascribed to Mary in the Church of Rome—namely the “queen of Heaven,” and “mother of God,” are the very same titles ascribed to this female divinity—the goddess of the ancients. She was entitled in the east—the *mother of the gods*, and in the west—the *queen of heaven*! But, however it originated, there is no doubt that Mary is now as much recognized as worshiped in the Roman Church, as was the queen of heaven in the wide platform of the Roman Empire. In all its essential elements the Roman Empire and the Roman Church—the Pagan Rome, and the Papal Rome are in accord in this matter. The transfer to Mary, of all the devotion previously paid to a Juno, an Astarte, an Ashteroth, or an Isis, does not alter the essence of the thing. It is as much idolatry to worship Mary, as it was to worship Juno, as the queen of heaven.

There are persons in Italy and Spain who freely and readily admit much of this, and say that the prevalence of this conception, of a female divinity among so many ancient mythologies, was as it were the dispersed and scattered element of a coming truth—a sort of all-pervading prophecy or anticipation of a future reality—a looking into the depths of the future, as “coming events cast their shadows before,” and that all was to be fulfilled in the exaltation of the Virgin Mother. They imagine, that as the promise of a Messiah was once

universally spread among the families of Noah, and as it passed by tradition through many generations, so the woman, through whom He was to come, became a hope, a creation in their mythologies, and was thus the great archetype of all these female divinities of the heathen world. Persons who believe this, argue, that when the nations lost all knowledge of the true God, and created false gods for their worship, and worshiped them in his stead, their idolatry consisted not in their worship of a god, but in their worshiping a false one; and in like manner the idolatry of the heathen was not their worshiping a female divinity, but in worshiping these that were false, instead of her who is revealed as the only true one—even Mary. This view of the subject is a favorite one in countries where Mary is worshiped, not indeed in name and title, *as a goddess*, but with all the same reverence and devotion and service and worship, *as if she were a goddess*. There can be no question as to the fact that, in those countries, she is the divinity prayed to more frequently—loved more fervently—worshiped more devoutly, and depended on more entirely, than either God, the Son, or the Holy Spirit. Whether the Church of Rome approves of this is another question; but of the matter of fact, there can be no doubt whatever.

All this, it is apparent, only makes the charge of idolatry more strictly and painfully applicable. That which was the religion of Christ is gradually becoming the religion of Mary. And in these countries it is customary, as with us, to speak of the *religion of Christ*, so with them to speak of the *religion of Mary*.

The answer, however, which they usually give on this subject is, that they do not worship Mary *as a goddess*, or *as a divinity*—that they regard her as a creature; the most exalted of all, even as queen of angels and of men, but a creature still—that they feel as strongly as ourselves the heinous sin of giving divine worship to a creature—that they give to her a different worship—an inferior worship to that which they give to God. And that, inasmuch as they do not worship her *as God* or *as a goddess*, they are not liable to the charge of idoi-

atry, which, in their view, consists of giving to a creature that kind and degree of worship which belongs only to the Creator.

I have answered this by reminding them that our charge against the Church of Rome, was not that she worshiped Mary *as a goddess*; our charge was, that she worshiped her *as a creature*; that knowing her to be only a creature, a woman, she worshiped her as God only ought to be worshiped. If the Church of Rome regarded her *as a goddess*, and worshiped her *as such*, it would at least be consistent; but regarding her *as a creature*, and worshiping her *as a woman*, with a religious worship which belongs exclusively to God, is the very essence of idolatry.

I have often asked yet further—wherein consists the difference between *the worship paid to Mary*, and *the worship rendered to God*? The offering prayer—the presenting hymns of praise—the making solemn vows—the consecration of the votary to her service—the devoting gifts and offerings of wealth—the dedication of children—the sacrifice of the Mass—all these are done to Mary, and in honor of Mary, as well as to God, and in honor of God. They pray to her by her sufferings beneath the cross. They plead her merits even as they do those of Jesus Christ. And therefore I ask—wherein consists the distinction in the Church of Rome, between the *worship paid to Mary*, and the *worship paid to God*?

They generally answer this by stating that there are two great points of distinction; that these are so marked as to place the two kinds and degrees of worship as wide as the poles. The *first* is, that they never pray through the merits of Mary, but only through the merits of Christ; pleading not the merits of a creature, but only the merits of Christ. And *secondly*, that they never pray to Mary as if she could grant any thing of herself, of her own power, as if she could grant any blessing, but only to exert her influence with Jesus Christ, that He may grant the petition. They state that they never pray for any thing *by her merits*, or ask her to grant any thing *by her own power*.

This is a statement of fact, and must be examined like every

assertion of fact, and accepted or rejected according to the evidence.

The right and just course in such an investigation is to lay aside the private statements or practices of individuals, and to open the devotional books—the prayer-books in use in the Church of Rome and especially those that are the authorized formularies of that Church.

Is it a fact that in the Church of Rome they do not pray through the merits of the Virgin Mary?

I. The following is the form of absolution as given in “The Ursuline Manual”—a book in very general use among the Roman Catholics of England :

“I absolve thee from all thy sins in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen. May the passion of our Lord Jesus Christ, *the merits of the blessed Virgin Mary*, and of all the saints, may whatever good thou shalt do, or whatever evil thou shalt suffer, be to thee unto the remission of thy sins, the increase of grace and the recompense of life everlasting. Amen.” Edition of 1835, p. 159.

II. In the “brief account of the Virgin Mary of Mount Carmel,” published in Ireland, France, and Rome, is the following explanation of an indulgence.

“It is a grace by the means of which, some condition being annexed by the person granting it, are remitted the penances, which should otherwise be done in this world or in Purgatory, for the actual sins already remitted through the infinite merits of our Lord Jesus Christ, and *of the blessed Virgin Mary.*”

III. In the “collection of prayers and pious works to which indulgences are attached,” published with authority at Rome, 1844, p. 8, we read as follows :

“This is a treasure, which continues forever in the light of God, the treasure of the merits and satisfaction of Jesus Christ, *of the most Blessed Virgin Mary* . . . Jesus Christ together with his superabundant passion left to the Church militant on earth an infinite treasure, not deposited in a measure of meal or buried in a field, but committed to the Church to be dispensed in a wholesome way to the faithful by the blessed

Peter, who holds the key of heaven, and by his successors the Vicars of Jesus Christ on earth. To the abundance of this treasure, *the merits of the blessed Virgin Mary* assist as a help."

IV. "The Wonders of God," was published in Rome, 1841, and in Part I, and Wonder 23, the following is related with approval, of the Prioress of St. Martin's at Milan.

"She was accustomed to pray for the grace of the liberation (of the souls in Purgatory) through the merits of the most precious blood of the Saviour, and through the ardent love which He had shown on the cross. To this prayer she gave new efficacy by asking this grace *through the merits of the Divine Mother*, especially through the sufferings she endured at the foot of the cross."

V. In "The Missal," published in England for the use of the Laity, 1836, p. 527, there is the following prayer to be used in a votive mass.

"O God, who by the most glorious mother of thy Son, wast pleased to appoint a new order in thy Church for delivering the faithful out of the hands of the infidels, grant, we beseech thee, that we may also be delivered from the slavery of the devil, *by her merits* and prayers, whom we devoutly honor in the instruction of so charitable a work."

VI. In "The Roman Breviary," in the winter portion and in the office of Mary, is the following prayer.

"May the Lord conduct us to the kingdom of heaven by the prayers and *merits of the blessed ever-Virgin Mary and all the saints.*"

VII. In the service of the Mass, in what is called "the ordinary of the Mass," the priest bows to the altar and prays—I cite their own English translation—

"We beseech thee *by the merits of thy saints*, whose relics are here, *and of all thy saints*, that thou wouldest vouchsafe to forgive me all my sins. Amen."

VIII. Again in the same, after they commemorate the living, the priest goes on :

"Communicating with and honoring, in the first place, the

memory of *the ever-glorious Virgin Mary*, mother of our Lord and God Jesus Christ, as also of his blessed apostles and martyrs—*through whose merits* and prayers, grant that we may be always defended by the help of thy protection, through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.”

These eight illustrations, sad and painful as they are, might be multiplied indefinitely from the Breviary, the Missal, and the ordinary books of devotion. They set at rest the question, as to whether the Roman Catholics pray *through the merits of the Virgin Mary*. They seem not content with the infinitely precious merits of Christ, but require also the merits of Mary ! there is nothing more heart-saddening than this ; for there is nothing more dishonoring to the merits of the Saviour, or so revolting to the spirit of a true Christianity. It is as if the merits of Jesus Christ were not adequate—as if they needed the merits of Mary—as if the Creator needed the creature !

There is a second averment. It is to the effect that though they pray to Mary, it is only for her intercession, and that they never suppose that she has any power or can herself do any thing, but only that she intercedes for those that pray to her.

This likewise is a question of fact, and must be determined, not by the statement of an individual as to his own belief or practice, but by evidence.

In illustrating this from their books, there is not the least difficulty except from the abundance of evidence, and still more in the grief and sorrow that every holy mind will feel in the perusal of their language.

One illustration is from a work published in these countries, and most widely circulated. It is entitled “A Brief Account of Indulgences, etc., conferred on the Order, etc., of the Virgin Mary of Mount Carmel.” Dublin, 1826, p. 13.

“The affection of an earthly mother bears no proportion to that of the Virgin, who, to show herself truly the mother of those who wear her holy scapular, did not rest fully satisfied with having preserved them from bodily harm, and kept them out of hell, as far as lies in her, through the mediation of her

powerful protection, but also promised as a truly loving mother, not enduring the sight of her dear and beloved children suffering in the flames of Purgatory, that she would free them as soon as possible, particularly on the first Saturday after their death, as being a day set aside for her honor, and bring them to eternal joy in Paradise."

The whole is minutely related, and confirmed by Pope John XXII. in the Bull published in March, 1822.

Again, in order that the authority for all this may be clearly seen and received by the members of the Order, they are informed not only of the grant of this Bull of Pope John XXII. but of its confirmation by no less than four subsequent popes. It continues,

"This extraordinary Bull, called 'The Sabbatine,' was confirmed in 1412, by the Sovereign Pontiff, Alexander V. by another Bull, which commences, *Tenore cujusdam Privilegii*, and by Clement VII. in his Apostolic Bull given in favor of the Carmelites, in 1524, the first words of which are *Dilecti filii*, which, after recounting the indulgences and privileges given to these, continues thus, 'And on their departure from this life, the glorious Virgin mother of God herself, will, on the Saturday succeeding the death of the members, whether brother monks, or sister nuns, visit them, and free their souls from the punishment of Purgatory.' Pius V. confirmed their privilege, in a Bull in 1566, and the Sovereign Pontiff, Gregory, in a Bull in 1577, which contains a confirmation of all favors, indulgences, and privileges of the Carmelite order, specifying the day to be Saturday, in conformity with the revelation of the Virgin, etc."

This descent of the Virgin into Purgatory, apparently designed as a set-off or parallel to our Lord's supposed descent to the same region, is not only published in these countries, but also published with authority at Rome itself, during the time of Gregory XVI. The following is from the "Wonders of God." Rome, 1841, vol. ii. p. 31.

"Among the other devotions to the Queen of Heaven, which give great hope, and promise the precious grace of

rising quickly from the sufferings of Purgatory and passing away to the joys of heaven, the principle is that which is commonly called that of Mount Carmel—especially in the Bull, called “The Sabbatina,” and in the decree of the Sacred Congregation, they assert, that the most Blessed Virgin, is ascertained to concede to the professors of this devotion—the liberation from Purgatory, to their great relief from punishment, on the first Saturday after their death.”

Here is the Bull of one Pope confirmed by four Bulls from four subsequent popes, and republished by Gregory XVI. in 1841, teaching that the Virgin Mary herself visits Purgatory every Saturday and releases certain privileged persons. The extent of the Order of the Scapular, or as they are usually called, Carmelites, and Scapularians, is demonstrative of the extent of faith in the reality of this; and as it is impossible to call this the intercession of Mary—as it can only be regarded as her own act—the act of descending to Purgatory—the act of saving from its sufferings—the act of bringing the souls thence to Heaven, proves the belief of her having power in herself to do these things. It is evidently not her asking her Son, or interceding with him to do them, but she does them herself.

The following illustrates the full extent of the power she is supposed to possess, not indeed inherently, but by cession from her Son. We read in “The Glories of Mary,” by SAINT Alphonso de Liguori :

“St. Bernardine of Sienna does not fear to advance that all, even *God himself, is subject to the empire of Mary*. The saint wishes to insinuate thereby, that God hears Mary’s prayers, as if they were commands. The Lord, O Mary, says St. Anselm, has so exalted you that his favor has rendered you omnipotent ! yes, says Richard of St. Lawrence, Mary is omnipotent, for according to all laws the queen enjoys THE SAME PRIVILEGES as the king, and that power may be EQUAL between the Son and the mother. Jesus has rendered Mary OMNIPOTENT ; the one is omnipotent by nature, the other is omnipotent by grace,” c. vi. sec. 1.

There is here an ascription of the Divine attribute of **MONOPOTENCE** to Mary. There is also an assertion of an **EQUALITY** in "privilege" and in "power" with Jesus Christ. There is also a statement that God himself is **SUBJECT** to the empire of Mary. As this awful statement professes to be founded on a saying of Saint Bernardine, the original words may here be cited. The words of SAINT Bernardine are these :

"As many creatures serve the glorious Virgin Mary as serve THE TRINITY, namely, all created things, whatsoever degree they may hold in creation, whether spiritual as angels, or rational as men, or corporeal as the heavenly bodies or the elements. And all things that are in Heaven and in earth, whether they be the damned or the blessed, all which are brought under the government of God, are likewise subject to the glorious Virgin. Forasmuch as He, who is the Son of God, and of the blessed Virgin, wishing to make the sovereignty of his mother EQUAL in some sort to the sovereignty of his Father, even He, who was God, served his mother on earth. Whence, Luke ii. 51, it is written of the Virgin and the glorious Joseph, 'He was subject unto them,' that as this proposition is true—all things are subject to the command of God, even the Virgin herself, so this again is also true—all things are subject to the command of the Virgin, even God himself."

These words make the government of the Virgin *co-extensive* with the government of God. They also expressly state that Christ has willed the sovereignty of the Mother to be *equal* with the sovereignty of the Father. They also state that as the Virgin is subject unto God, so it is *equally true* that God is subject to the Virgin !

These are the sentiments of SAINT Bernardine and SAINT Alphonso de Liguori. And in the act of canonization of the saints, it is declared by the Church of Rome, that there is no error contained in their writings. These words, therefore, are pronounced to be free from error ! And yet a Christian can not read them without inexpressible sadness and dread.

This system of placing Mary practically on an *equality* with

Christ is carried out in a variety of ways. The following prayer is a well-known instance :

"Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, have mercy on us.

"Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, receive my last breath.

"Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, receive me now and in the hour of death."

Another illustration is in the closing words of "The Glories of Mary."

"O Jesus! O Mary! may your names live in my heart and in the hearts of all men! may I forget all other names in order to remember your admirable names alone! O Jesus, my Redeemer! O Mary, my Mother! when my last hour shall come, when my soul shall be at the eve of its departure from the world, grant, I beseech you, that my last words may be—Jesus! Mary! I love you! Jesus! Mary! I give you my heart and my soul. Amen."

This certainly places Mary on an equality with Christ as one to be prayed to, invoked, and loved alike. The Spanish form of the doxology is still more striking :

"Glory be to the Father.

"Glory be to the Son.

"Glory be to the Holy Ghost.

"Glory be to the Most Holy Virgin.

"Throughout all ages, forever and ever. Amen!"*

It is due to many Roman Catholics of the laity, to say that I have never read these and similar passages from the devotional books of the Church of Rome, while conversing with her members, without observing shame and confusion in the faces of my opponents. It is the homage they are forced to pay to truth. It is always apparent that they feel such language to be blasphemous and idolatrous; or, at least, that it approaches thereto—that it justifies the strong feeling that we manifest against the practice; that such language completely cuts away the ground under their feet; and it comes before them vexatiously when arguing with us; and they have

* See Meyrick's "Working of the Church in Spain."

no answer or explanation further than, that these passages have a meaning widely different from what they seem to convey—that they are to be understood in what they call a *Catholic sense*—that a Catholic reads them with a *Catholic sense*; and that they do no harm to one who knows that, however idolatrous and blasphemous the language may seem, yet it is not to be understood in that sense. I have asked what that Catholic sense was, and I never could learn it. It certainly must be something very different from the natural construction of the words.

I have pressed this matter further; I have asserted that in these books they not only place Mary sometimes on an equality with Christ, but sometimes above him.

And first for placing her on an equality with Christ.

I can never, while I live, forget the shock I received when I first saw in their churches in Italy the Virgin Mary crowned as Queen of Heaven, seated on the same throne with Jesus crowned as King of Heaven. They were the God-man and the God-woman enthroned alike. In all my previous experience of Romanism it never occurred to me for a moment that any thing so truly awful could possibly have been perpetrated. I felt the shock; every holy feeling felt its violence; no heathen idolatry could have done more. There were Jesus and Mary, crowned alike, enthroned alike, bearing a scepter alike. There was nothing to distinguish one above the other. They appeared precisely like a Jupiter and Juno, like a man and wife, like a king and queen. And I loathed in my soul such representations, as elevating the creature Mary to a level with the God Christ, or lowering the God Christ to a level with the creature Mary. It made them both on an equality. They were god and goddess, or they were merely man and woman. I soon found that this pervaded the whole region of Italy. However kindly I might be disposed to interpret or explain, and however gently I might be disposed to judge, I could not shut my eyes or ears to the evidence that there was a manifest tendency to exalt Mary to a level with Jesus, that she should be crowned, sceptered, and enthroned alike, and

that she should be loved and served and worshiped alike, and that Christianity should be made the religion of Mary, as well as the religion of Christ.*

But this was by no means the only or most sad evidence of an equality. It is painful—it is saddening, to commit the dark and dreary reality to paper. It is enough to freeze the blood of any Christian man; and yet it is the common, I may say, the universal faith of Southern Europe. It is this: whatever were the mysteries or glories connected with the miraculous conception, the miraculous birth, the miraculous resurrection, the miraculous ascension; whatever were the mysteries of wonder and of awe in the history of Jesus Christ, they are all copied or rather travestied and applied to the Virgin Mary; so as that she may appear as wondrous a person as Jesus Christ, as having been characterized by an immaculate conception as miraculous, a birth as wonderful, a resurrection as marvelous, and an ascension or assumption as glorious. Whatever were the miracles of awe and of mystery and of glory connected with one, are claimed and attributed to the other. And to such an extent is this carried, that in some of their churches the paintings on one side represent the striking incidents that give wonder to the birth and life and death of Jesus Christ, and on the other side the very same or similar incidents as characteristic of the birth and life and death of the Virgin Mary. For example, if on one side of the church there is painted the angel announcing to Mary the miraculous conception of Jesus, it is paralleled by another on the other side, representing an angel announcing to Anna the immaculate conception of Mary. If there be on one side the miraculous birth and the infancy of the Son, there will be on

* In the Baptistery of Parma there is a representation of the Trinity. At the top of the triangle is the Father. At the two angles of the base are the Son and the Mother; the two arms of the Father resting on the heads of the Son and Mary, form the legs of the triangle; while the arms of the Son, extended to the head of Mary, form the base. I looked at it with horror! The Sacristan smiled, and called it the Trinity of the Father, the Son, and the Virgin.

the other the birth and infancy of the mother. If here there is a representation of the reception of the child Jesus by the High Priest in the temple, there is another representing the presentation of the child Mary under similar circumstances. In one compartment there may be seen represented the death of the Saviour, and opposite may be seen in another compartment a representation of all connected with the death of the Virgin. Here we see portrayed all connected with the resurrection of the Lord, and there we see in like manner all the apocryphal details of the resurrection of the Mother. On one side may be seen all that human art can do to exhibit the glories of the ascension of Jesus Christ, and on the other side all that the most exquisite art can accomplish to represent the glories of the assumption of Mary. Here the eye is arrested to see the paintings of Jesus Christ entering the heavens and enthroned and crowned as the King of Heaven; and there the eye is attracted to another painting of Mary entering the heavens and enthroned and crowned as Queen of Heaven. In all the miracles and mysteries of His life, she is placed on a level with Him. If she is not the rival, she certainly is the equal in every wonder and mystery. And, therefore, in one half the churches of Italy, Mary may be seen crowned with a like crown, seated on the same throne, and holding a similar scepter with Jesus Christ. It is impossible to see all this and not feel that it embodies an item in the popular faith of the Church of Rome; and that she, in authorizing these pictures in her churches, does authorize the notion, so prevalent, that the Virgin Mary is the equal of Jesus Christ; not, indeed, in the essence of her nature, but in something which she has never defined, and which is left to the imaginations of her votaries.

The Church of Rome has taken away the Holy Scriptures, and has given these pictures to the people in their stead. God gave the Holy Scriptures to teach the people, and the Church of Rome has taken them away, on the ground that the people might mistake their meaning; and she has given in their stead these pictures, which are still more liable to lead them astray. God has permitted no error in that Book which He

has given ; and the Church of Rome was bound to see that there was no error in these pictures which she has substituted for them. The truth is, that the Holy Scriptures do not teach the doctrines of Rome, and therefore she has removed them ; while those pictures do teach her unscriptural tenets ; and therefore she allows them. The people naturally think that what is permitted to be seen in the Church is authorized by the Church. These pictures come before them with all the apparent sanction of the Church ; and no one can be surprised that, seeing them, they regard Mary as equal with Jesus Christ.

I have sometimes called the attention of my Roman Catholic friends to the practice in the Church of Rome of taking those passages of the Holy Scripture which are applicable only to Jesus Christ, and applying them to Mary ; and even going so far as to apply to her the distinctive titles that belong to Him. In the devotional books of that Church, even in her authorized litanies, as the litany of the Virgin, the very titles that in Holy Scripture are applied to Jesus Christ are addressed to her. In the Holy Scripture He is styled "the Advocate with the Father ;" in those books she is addressed as "our advocate." If in Holy Scripture He is called "the one Mediator," in these books she is called "our mediator, or mediatrix." If in Holy Scripture He is described as "the Door," or Gate, in these books she is designated as "the gate." If in Holy Scripture He is described as the "Refuge for sinners," in these books she is likewise declared to be the refuge for sinners. If in the word of God He is called "the Father of mercies," she is styled in these books "the mother of mercy." If in Holy Scriptures He is "our Saviour," in these books she is also designated "our saviour." If He is styled in Scripture "the Good Shepherd," she is called "the divine shepherdess." If He is "our Lord," she is "our lady ;" and if He is the "King of Heaven," she is proclaimed the "queen of heaven." She is thus, as far as the language of Holy Scripture goes, placed on an equality with Him ; and although they profess not to mean or intend this, yet it is

enough that they do it, and that every one who reads their devotional books may see it, and read it for themselves.

And not only this : they have gone further ; for in the well-known Psalter of Saint Bonaventura, a portion of which was republished with authority in Rome, in 1844, every prayer, every blessing, every thanksgiving that the sacred Psalmist addressed to God, is altered and adapted to the Virgin Mary, as being to be ascribed to her, and prayed of her. The title "God" is omitted, and "Mary" substituted for it. The title "Lord" is removed, and "lady" inserted in its stead. The awful character of this blasphemy and sacrilege can only be understood by examples. Even the Lord's prayer is altered and addressed to her—"Our lady who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name," etc. ; and the *Te Deum* is changed and addressed to her—"We praise thee, O Mary ; we acknowledge thee to be the lady," etc.

And now, as to elevating Mary *above* Christ.

These devotional books proceed further. If they sometimes elevate Mary to be the equal with Christ, they also sometimes elevate her beyond and above Him in all the attributes of mercy and love. I have myself been witness to this ; for in my conversations with the priests at Rome, they repeatedly asserted that as Christ was the Judge who must deal justice, and as Mary was the "mother of mercy," who could exercise pity and love ; so it was better for us to pray through her than through Christ ;—that His nature and characteristic was justice and not mercy ; and that hers was mercy and not justice : and that God heard those prayers sooner which were offered through her, than those that were offered through Him. This belief is prevalent now universally in the south of Europe.

The following passage from "The Glories of Mary" will illustrate this in their own words, c. 4. sec. 1.

"In order to increase our confidence in Mary, SAINT ANSELME assures us that *our prayers will often be more speedily heard in invoking her name, than in calling on that of Jesus Christ* ; and the reason he assigns is, that Jesus being no less

our Judge than our Saviour, he must avenge the wrongs we do him by our sins. While the Holy Virgin being solely our advocate, is obliged to entertain only sentiments of pity for us. We are far from insinuating, nevertheless that she is *more powerful* than her son; Jesus Christ is our only Mediator, He alone has obtained our reconciliation with God the Father, but as in rendering to Him, whom we must necessarily consider a judge who will punish the ungrateful, it is probable a sentiment of fear may lessen the confidence necessary for being heard, it would seem that in applying to Mary, whose office is that of mercy, our hope would be so strong as to obtain all we ask for. *How is it, that whereas we ask many things of God without obtaining them, we no sooner ask through Mary than they are granted us ?*"

This assuredly is strong language, and as strange as it is strong. It plainly teaches, that prayers presented through Mary are more readily heard than prayers presented through Jesus Christ. It is practically dashing the Mediatorial crown from the brow of Jesus, and hurling Him from the Mediatorial throne; and as a greater blasphemy could not be uttered, so a greater sacrilege could not be committed by man or devil. But it does not stand alone. Let the following speak for itself.

"We read in the chronicles of St. Francis, that brother Leo once saw in a vision, two ladders, one red, on the summit of which was Jesus Christ, and the other white, on the top of which presided his blessed Mother. He observed that many who endeavored to ascend the first ladder, after mounting a few steps, fell down. And on trying again were equally unsuccessful, so that *they never attained the summit*. But a voice having told them to make trial of the white ladder, *they soon gained the top*, the blessed Virgin having held forth her hands to help them." c. 8. sec. 8.

These are the words of SAINT Alphonso, in whose writings it is asserted that there are no errors. And these words are from that very book of which a new edition has been published, with the authority and recommendation of Cardinal Wise-

MAN. And yet these words plainly teach that those who seek to enter heaven by Jesus Christ "never attain the summit," while those who approach through the Virgin Mary "soon reach" their place of glory!

It is plainly implied by the former extract, that Mary is more accessible, more pitiful, more merciful than Jesus Christ; at least that He is a Judge to avenge, and she is an advocate to compassionate—that He is all justice, and she is all mercy—and that our prayers when offered through her are more easily and quickly answered than when offered through him. This certainly is placing Mary above Christ, in that which is the gem of the royal diadem, mercy and compassion. In the second extract this is carried out to its natural sequence. Those that approach heaven by Christ fail. Those that approach by Mary succeed. And this at least is placing her above him, in the matter of our salvation. The ladder or way red with his blood has failed; while that which is white with her virginity is found to succeed. Christ is described as giving no help. Mary is pictured as putting forth her hand and saving!

Such language frightens one. To say that it was superstition, or idolatry, or blasphemy, or heresy, is only to give it a hard and bad name. And I have never known good effected by hard or bad names. But language such as this makes the heart beat. It frightens one.

Nor must it be supposed that this language is antiquated or foreign. I had myself heard it from the lips of living divines from the Church of Rome during my residence in that city. It was there stated to me, that "Christ himself was not so willing to hear our prayers, and did not hear them so quickly when offered simply to himself, as when they were offered through the Blessed Virgin."

A Roman Catholic periodical in England—"The Rambler," in reviewing this statement, has the following startling passage:—

"In one sense, *the blessed Virgin Mary is more sure to hear our prayers than our Blessed Lord.* It is the privilege

of Mary to share the loving-kindness of her Son toward sinners, and not to execute his wrath upon them. And therefore she is *all mercy*, while he is *both mercy and justice*. Her mercy, indeed, is but the mercy of a creature, while His is that of the omnipotent God. Her love is that of an Intercessor, His the love of a Redeemer. But nevertheless, the only office she is commissioned to fulfill toward us is one of pity; and thus in one sense *a sinner's prayers are more sure to be heard by her than by her Son.*"

And thus He, who left the heavens in loving-compassion for us—who walked our fallen world in melting pity for us—who bled, and died, and suffered in an unquenchable love for us—who even now intercedes in the heavens in sympathy for us—is described as not compassionating us, not pitying us, not loving us, not sympathizing with us, so much as Mary! The Creator must thus veil and retire before the creature! How strangely significant were the words addressed by an apostle to the Church of Rome, "They worshiped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen."—Rom. i. 25.

As this charge is the most awful that can be adduced against a professing Church, it is no more than common justice, that their reply should be heard. That reply is different, according to the different class of religionists of Rome, to whom the argument is addressed.

Those members of the Church of Rome, who are the devotional, pious, religious, and generally those of Italy and Spain, avow all this language toward Mary, and defend it as admissible. They have no desire either to change or to soften it. They are so unacquainted with the Scriptures—so utterly ignorant of scriptural Christianity, that they do not see any thing wrong or objectionable in all this elevation of Mary; on the other hand, they regard it as right and fitting. It falls in with all their religious systems, they are endeavoring to elevate the worship of Mary more and more every day, and they anticipate, so to speak, her perfect, and supreme elevation. A Roman lady, one day said in my presence, "that the hope of

spreading true morality in Italy was most promising, because the religion of the most holy Mary was so much extending." And one of the priests of that city stated to myself, that "the religion of Christ was every day becoming more and more the "religion of Mary," and he spoke this as approving of the change—the transition is gradual but certain. In order, therefore, to raise her from the inferior or veiled position which she has hitherto held in the ideal of Christianity, they have no hesitation in having recourse to every extravagance of language and of worship, so as to elevate her on high, and so to speak, to unveil her before the eyes of her votaries. When, therefore, this devout, pious, and religious class of Romanists, hears these passages of their devotional books read as objectionable, they at once adopt them and justify them; they are as much surprised at our rejecting them as we are at their receiving them.

There is another class, however, in the Church of Rome, who look on all this as the extravagance of the devout and superstitious. They always profess to dislike such language, as calculated to impair the character of the Church of Rome in the eyes of Protestants, and that for that cause they profess to regret and deplore it. They think it may do very well for the ignorant masses, and therefore they are unwilling to speak against it; and they argue, with some show of justice and reason, when they say that it is not fair to judge the Church of Rome by these books.

The answer which I have given to this has generally silenced these persons. I have reminded them that there is one book—a book unspeakably valued and cherished among us as the Book of books—THE HOLY SCRIPTURES, which, though divinely inspired, and therefore containing no error whatever, the Church of Rome has prohibited, on the avowed ground that its language is liable to be mistaken by the simple and ignorant. The Church of Rome, in the decree of the congregation of the Index, has prohibited the perusal of this book by the laity, unless where the bishop gives license, as thinking it may be read without danger—has prohibited its being sold by any

bookseller, unless with permission from the bishop—and has prohibited its being read even by the regular clergy, i. e., by the monastic orders, unless under a like permission.* I have said, that it was a fact—a broad and great fact—that the Church of Rome professed to prohibit such books as were likely to injure the faith of her people, and so to prohibit the HOLY SCRIPTURES on the ground that they were liable to be mistaken by the simple and ignorant. Now, I ask—why she has not prohibited these devotional books if she thinks them liable to be mistaken by the simple and ignorant? And why do not you, I have said to the priests—why do not you, who are so active in suppressing the reading of the Holy Scriptures on the ground of their liability to being mistaken—why do not you use the same activity in suppressing these devotional books, if indeed you disapprove of them, or think them liable to be mistaken? And does not your zeal against the Holy Scriptures seem to imply that the people may learn more evil from them than from these books, which you say you disapprove of? And as to their being authorized or not by the Church, it should be remembered that they are often published with authority in Rome herself, and that too in a place where the press is so scrupulously watched, that no man could publish or sell the Holy Scriptures. Why do they not at Rome, or elsewhere, prohibit the publication of these books, as well as of the Holy Scriptures? The fact that they *prohibit* the publication of the Holy Scriptures, and the fact that they *authorize* the publication of these books, must stand as proof that they approve of these more than of the Holy Scriptures.

And now the question comes—What saith the Scripture?

The contrast is striking indeed. The devotional books of the Church of Rome are full, even to overflowing of *the religion of Mary*. The Holy Scriptures contain nothing of it, but only *the religion of Christ*.

The Holy Scriptures “given by inspiration of God,” and “able to make us wise unto salvation through faith,” say

* These several provisions are contained in the decree of the Index concerning the Holy Scriptures.

nothing whatever respecting her birth, as little as possible concerning her *life*, and not one word about her *death*. This silence is significant.

But the Church of Rome, instead of imitating the Divine silence, has supplied material in abundance; she professes to tell us all about the marriage of her parents—her own miraculous birth—the incidents of her childhood—her intercourse with Joseph—her betrothal and marriage—her conversations with the kings of the east—her after life—her death, burial, and assumption into heaven—her coronation as queen of heaven, of angels and of saints! An inventive genius has not been wanting.

There is in all that concerns Mary, a strange contrast indeed between the Holy Scriptures and the writings of the Church of Rome.

It is not the least remarkable fact of the gospel history, that it does not give a single instance of our Lord's having addressed Mary *as his mother*. The gospels omit all mention of his childhood, except that he was subject to his parents, and of course that they directed him as his parents, and that he obeyed them as their child. But in all his ministerial life—from the moment of his manifesting his Messiahship—from the baptism in the Jordan, he never once addresses Mary *as his mother*. He seems never to have recognized her as such.

There are only three instances in the Holy Scriptures where our Lord is described as speaking to Mary.

I. The first occurred in his childhood. He left his parents, and they knew not where he was. They found him among the doctors in the temple. The Gospel narrates, Luke ii. 48-51, that "when they saw him, they were amazed, and his mother said unto him, Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? behold thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing. And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business? And they understood not the saying which he spake unto them. And he went down with them, and became subject unto them: but his mother kept all these sayings in her heart." This incident occurred in his childhood, and these his first words detailed as

addressed to Mary, certainly do not justify any very extravagant devotional language toward her on our part.

II. The next occasion was after he had commenced his public teaching. The Gospel narrates, John ii. 3, 4, "When they wanted wine, the mother of Jesus saith unto him, they have no wine. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, what have I to do with thee? mine hour is not yet come." He here addresses her not as his "mother," but simply as "woman," a term not of contempt or of slight, but the term of respect or courtesy ordinarily applied to females. He thus addresses her with no peculiar deference, but only with the same language in which he would have addressed any other woman present. And when he adds "What have I to do with thee?" or as the Roman Catholics translate it, "What is it to me, and to thee?" the words seem to convey some gentle reproof for her interference, implying that he could not recognize any thing in common between them—any relation which could justify her interfering; and though she might think the time was come for his intended miracle, he preferred waiting longer, "*My* time," he said, "is not yet come."

III. The last instance of his addressing Mary was on the cross. He could then see her natural sorrows—the sorrows of a mother beside a dying son. One might suppose it the occasion of drawing from him language of touching endearment and tenderness—but no. He knew what was in man, and knew that any endearing or tender words toward her might and would be perverted into words to justify the worship of a woman. He therefore would not even call her his mother; he addressed her only as he would have addressed any other female, "Woman." And he commits her, now widowed, childless, destitute, to the care of his loved disciple John; and desires her to regard John in future as her son, and desires John to protect her as his mother in future. "Woman," said he, "behold thy son!" and addressing John—"Behold thy mother!" And in obedience to this dying wish, the beloved disciple "took her unto his own home." John was to be a son to Mary, and Mary was to be a mother to John.

In these, which are the only instances in which our Lord is described as having spoken to Mary, there certainly is nothing to warrant the high, extreme, extravagant language of devotion which characterizes the devotional books of the Church of Rome. On the other hand, the fact—the simple fact—that in all the gospel history these are the only instances recorded; the simple fact that there is a settled, formal, deliberate silence on the subject, is calculated to convey the feeling that the Holy Ghost designed to cut away all excuse or occasion or ground for such language of devotion and worship, as He, who knew the future as well as the present, foresaw would be introduced into the Church.

But the Holy Scriptures go further than this. Our Lord is described as speaking twice about his mother; and on both occasions his words bear a wonderful significance.

I. The first is in Matt. xii. 46—"While he yet talked to the people, behold his mother and his brethren stood without, desiring to speak with him. Then one said unto him, Behold, thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to speak with thee. But he answered and said unto him that told him, Who is my mother? and who are my brethren? And he stretched forth his hand toward his disciples, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren! For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in Heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother." He thus heard of Mary wishing to speak with him; He does not comply; He remains as he was; and though He had then the opportunity of magnifying her before the eyes of all, He carefully avoids it, and seems not so much as to recognize her as His mother. He asks—"Who is *my mother*?" and he answers the question Himself—"Whosoever will do the will of my Father which is in Heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother." Whatever the tie or the love He owed a mother, should now be the tie and love which He would feel for all who do the will of God; and other relationship He recognized not. He was now the manifested Messiah, and He knew no ties on

earth but that common manhood which gave Him sympathy with all the people of God.

II. The second instance in which He is narrated as speaking of His mother is still more remarkable. Luke xi. 27—“It came to pass, as he spake these things, a certain woman of the company lifted up her voice, and said unto him, Blessed is the womb that bare thee, and the paps which thou hast sucked. But he said, Yea, rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it.” Here is a woman, in the feeling so natural in a woman, blessing her who was the mother of Jesus. She blesses the womb that bore Him and the breasts which suckled Him. It is to this day the universal argument among the members of the Church of Rome. And here we learn how our Lord regarded it. His answer is remarkable; “Yea,” was his confirmation of the words of the woman. She was indeed blessed who had borne and suckled Him; but there was a greater blessedness still than this—and however great was the blessedness of Mary as His mother, there was a blessedness still greater which every Christian woman may possess; for, “rather blessed,” that is, “more blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it.” If, then, any woman among us would have a blessedness, still greater than that which Mary possessed, as his mother, she has only to hear the word of God and keep it.

Truly there is a great contrast between the words of the Holy Scriptures and the teaching of the Church of Rome.

One only consideration remains; it is that connected with what is called—most untruly called—the Angelical Salutation.

A young man, a fine, open, generous fellow, who was very earnest and zealous for the religion of Rome, stopped me one day to ask me whether “the Angelical Salutation” was not in the Holy Scriptures; that a Protestant had denied it to him; and he wished to hear it from myself.

I asked him to repeat it for me.

He did so.—“Hail, Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee.

"Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb—JESUS.

"Holy Mary, pray for us now and at the hour of death. Amen."

I then said, that it consisted of three parts. There was, first, the salutation of the angel: there was, next, the words of Elizabeth, the mother of the Baptist: and, lastly, there was a prayer of the Church of Rome, which is not in the Holy Scriptures at all.

He did not seem quite to understand me; so I produced my little Roman Catholic translation of the New Testament, and showed him the place in Luke, i. 28—"Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with thee, blessed art thou among women." There is nothing more, I remarked, in the angel's salutation.

He read it again and again; he was inexpressibly puzzled; but, he asked me, where was the rest of it? Was not the rest of it a part of the Angelical Salutation?

I replied, of course, that it was not, and showed him the second part of it in Luke, i. 42. It was not the angel—it was Elizabeth who said, "Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb." I desired him to read it for himself.

He read it, and paused, and read it again and again, and asked where was the remainder of it? He seemed perplexed, and, as I thought, angered and chagrined.

I said, that the third part was, "Holy Mary, pray for us now and at the hour of death," and this was not spoken by the angel, nor by Elizabeth, and was not in the Holy Scriptures at all. It was the mere invention of the priests of Rome. And, I added, it was wickedly added to the angel's salutation;—it had been wickedly taught to you under the name of the angel's salutation;—it has been wickedly done to deceive you into the belief that the angel prayed to Mary, that you might be induced to think it could not be wrong for you to do what the angel did, and thus to pray to Mary to pray for you. Here is the Roman Catholic translation; you can judge for yourself.

He looked on the ground for a few moments—clasped his hands almost convulsively—covered his face with his hands—then letting them fall, he said, with a voice of deep pathos—O, sir, when our clergy deceive us, poor, ignorant people, thus, what is to become of us, and what are we to believe! He spoke with intense earnestness.

I said—God has given to you His word, the Holy Scriptures: He has told you “they are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith.” He has commanded you to “search the Scriptures;” read and believe them, and then no man shall be able to deceive you.

I believe you are right, was his only reply, as he left me very thoughtfully.

It may here be noticed that there is nothing in the angel's salutation to justify either prayer or worship to the Virgin Mary.

The word, “Hail” does not justify it, for it was only the ordinary salute of the time, and was addressed by our Lord himself to his disciples: he said, “All hail,” when certainly he did not pray to them nor worship them.—Matt. xxviii. 9.

The words—“The Lord be with thee,” do not justify it, for the very same words are addressed also by the angel to Gideon, “The Lord is with thee, thou mighty man of valor;” Judges vi. 12, and certainly they do not entitle Gideon to any worship.

The words—“Thou art highly favored,” or, as the Romanists translate it, “full of grace,” will not justify it, for the same words, indeed stronger, are addressed to the prophet Daniel—“O man, greatly beloved,” Dan. x. 19, and such words do not imply prayer or worship to him.

The words—“Blessed art thou among women,” as spoken to Mary, are no more than the words spoken of Jael—“Blessed shall Jael the wife of Heber the Kenite be; blessed shall she be above women in the tent;” Judges v. 24. Such words do not justify prayer or worship, either to Jael on one hand, or to the Virgin Mary on the other.

Let us think of Mary with tender affection, as of the mother of Jesus; but let us neither pray to her nor worship her; for prayer and worship belong exclusively to the Godhead.

THE CHRISTIAN PRIESTHOOD.

The Canons of Trent on the Priesthood and on the Mass—Occasion of this Conversation—The Sacrifice among Protestants—The figurative Application of the Term—The Priesthood of Jesus Christ—The Christian Ministry never called a Priesthood in Scripture—The only Priesthood on Earth is that of all Believers—The Sufficiency of Jesus Christ—The true Meaning of the Terms Priest and Presbyter.

THERE are few subjects at issue between the Church of Rome and ourselves, upon which I have been more frequently engaged in discussion, than on the sacrifice of the Mass. Its own innate importance, arising out of the principles it involves—the great value placed upon it by its votaries—its being regarded as their “morning and evening sacrifice,” the greatest and highest of all their rites, and the most efficacious, and precious, and important of all the mysteries of their faith, always invests its discussion with a prominence and an interest peculiarly its own. The most essential and characteristic elements of Romanism are all interwreathed and involved in it. And all the grandest truths of a Protestant Christianity are drawn out and engaged against it. It has thus naturally become in my intercourse with Romanists, a constant subject of controversial as well as of amicable conversation.

It is unhappily true, that upon this, as upon many other points at issue between us, there are mistakes on both sides, as to the real nature and character of the sacrifice of the Mass. Hence I have always felt it desirable when entering on this discussion, to obviate all mistakes and misapprehensions by letting the Church of Rome speak for herself in her four canons upon the subject.

The Canons of the Council of Trent are as follows:

"If any man shall say, that a true and proper sacrifice is not offered to God in the Mass, or that that which is offered, is only Christ offered to us to be eaten by us—let him be anathema."—Canon I.

"If any man shall say that Christ did not constitute the apostles sacrificers (sacerdotes) by the words 'Do this in remembrance of Me'—or that He did not ordain them, that they and other sacrificers (sacerdotes) might offer His body and blood—let him be anathema."—Canon II.

"If any man shall say that the sacrifice of the Mass is only a sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, or that it is a mere commemoration of the sacrifice done on the cross, and that it is not a propitiatory sacrifice, or that it is profitable only to the person who receives it, and that it ought not to be offered for the living and the dead, for sins, punishments, satisfactions, and other necessities—let Him be anathema."—Canon III.

"If any man shall say that by the sacrifice of the Mass there is blasphemy done to the most holy sacrifice of Christ offered on the cross, or that there is any dishonor done to Him in the sacrifice of the Mass—let him be anathema."—Canon IV.

In the following conversation, the subject was principally that involved in the second of these Canons; namely, the priesthood. The other Canons embody the subject-matter of a subsequent conversation.

While in conversation with a few Roman Catholics one day—the topic at the time being so non-theological a subject as the price of potatoes, and the best means of counteracting the schemes of some farmers and speculators who were combining to secure a high price for their stock—a combination often made to the disadvantage and injury of the poor—the Roman Catholic priest of the parish approached, accompanied by a number of his flock. He seemed excited, he held a stout hunting-whip in one hand and a small book in the other. The manner of his approach prepared me immediately for an encounter of a hostile kind, though I was much perplexed as to the cause; and I would gladly have retired, only that I

apprehended my doing so might be misconstrued. Hence I awaited his coming.

He waived his right hand in which he held his whip, and thus soon cleared an open space, keeping the people from pressing on him, and enabling all to see both him and myself. It seemed at the moment as if he was elate and confident—as if he felt he had some means of perfect triumph over me, and wished that all should be witnesses of his success. In his left hand he held open a volume which proved to be, not as I thought a missal, but the book of Common Prayer, and he held this toward me, pushing it almost into my very face.

Now, he exclaimed, here is your own Book—your own Protestant Prayer Book. You stated to some of my flock—and here are some of them that heard you say it—that the holy sacrifice of the Mass was not a sacrifice at all—that there was no such thing as a sacrifice in the Catholic Church—that there is no such office as that of a priest in the Church of the Holy Jesus, blessed be his holy name—and that thus there is neither priest nor sacrifice in the holy Catholic Church. Now to confute you, here is your own Protestant Prayer Book, where the service of your own Mass—I mean, he said, on observing a smile among the people, your own communion-service as you call it, is expressly called a sacrifice. The very words are “this sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving;” I will read them, he added, in a tone of triumph, “O Lord and heavenly Father, we thy humble servants entirely desire thy fatherly goodness, mercifully to accept this *our sacrifice* of praise and thanksgiving.” There, he exclaimed, in conscious triumph, they acknowledge it in their own Protestant Church, and deny it in the Catholic Church!

Every eye was now turned on me for an answer, and yet I felt that this was not the place, nor was my opponent in the state of mind and tone of feeling suited to a discussion on religion. So I told him we were just then talking about the high price of potatoes, and speaking of the best way of counteracting the combination of the farmers and speculators. And, I added, in the most kindly way, that if he would help

us in this matter, I would gladly talk with him on the other matter on some future occasion.

My proposal only made matters worse. He replied that he would have nothing to do with me about potatoes or any thing else, until I answered him about the Mass;—that I had said the Mass was not a sacrifice, and that there was no sacrifice in the Church, when in the Protestant Prayer Book itself the communion was expressly called a sacrifice.

I saw he would have his way, and I saw likewise that the people, who take an intense interest and pleasure in a controversial rencounter, quite as much as in any other species of fighting, wished me to reply.

I said that on the occasion alluded to I had stated that there *was* a sacrifice in the Church of Christ; that there *was one*, and only one, true propitiatory sacrifice that could take away sin or make atonement for sin—that *that* was the bleeding sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross of Calvary, “the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world;” that *that* was the one sacrifice required by all the Protestant Churches; and that we could recognize no other as a true, propitiatory, or atoning sacrifice. We feel and know—I added, with all the gentle courtesy I could show, and with all the kind and earnest feelings I entertained—and one of your education and information knows, that in a large and figurative sense, every act of prayer, or of praise, or of charity, or of love is a spiritual sacrifice. The Holy Scriptures describe prayer as if it were “incense,” and the lifting up of our hands in prayer and devotion as “an evening sacrifice.” The Holy Scriptures describe the doing good to others, even with our worldly substance, as “a sacrifice with which God is well pleased.” The Holy Scriptures describe the devotion of ourselves to Him as “a living sacrifice” which is acceptable to God. The Holy Scriptures describe the Christian as offering “*spiritual* sacrifices acceptable to God, through Jesus Christ.” All these earnest and devotional acts of the Christian life are “spiritual sacrifices.” And therefore we call our communion in the Lord’s Supper with prayer and praise and thanksgiving “a sacrifice

of praise and thanksgiving." This is simply the meaning of the words in the Prayer Book ; and therefore, what I said a few evenings since, was, that the sacrifice of Jesus Christ was the only true, *atoning* sacrifice in the Church : and that excepting this, there was not a true or *propitiatory* sacrifice in any Church. And that, therefore, the Mass of the Church of Rome was not a true and propitiatory sacrifice for sin as described in her creed—"I profess that in the Mass there is offered to God a true, proper, propitiatory sacrifice for the living and the dead." I appealed to our hearers as to whether this was not the purport of all I had stated ; and then I suggested that we should leave the subject for the present, and rather try something on which we were more likely to agree, instead of one on which we were sure to differ ; suggesting that as I had answered his question, I hoped he would now consult with us about the combination to raise the price of potatoes on the poor.

My appeal was useless. He looked at me with an appearance of conscious triumph, and added, in a tone which there was no mistaking—that not contented with saying to his flock that the holy Mass was not a sacrifice, I had also blasphemed the Catholic clergy, and said that he was no priest—that he, ay, that he was not a priest—for that there was no priest at all in the Church except Jesus Christ. He looked at me for a reply.

I answered very slowly, but very impressively, that whoever had so reported me had in one particular, reported me truly. The Lord Jesus Christ is the High Priest of the Church. Any and every Christian, may, in a figurative way, or in the spiritual sense, be called a priest, and is so called in Scripture ; but as for a real, true priest, in the sense of a man to offer a true and atoning sacrifice for sin, in this sense, in which it is used among you—neither in the Church of Rome, nor in the Church of England, nor in the Church of Scotland, nor in any Roman or Greek or Protestant Church is there a priest but the Lord Jesus Christ himself.

If I had spoken a thunderbolt or breathed a lightning flash,

he could not have been more excited. He exclaimed, that it was horrible blasphemy, and enough to drive a whole nation of Catholics, like Ireland, into rebellion and revolution! And without another word, he rushed from the midst of us, and walked away as rapidly as possible.

His sudden retreat had its natural effect on so peculiar and so excitable a people as our hearers. They were both disappointed and angered. I immediately expressed my regret, not indeed at his departure, but at his interruption of our previous consultation;—told them that I would say no more at that moment on the subject of the priesthood, but that I would speak of it again at our cottage lecture in the evening;—and so we resumed our consultation as to the best means of keeping down the price of potatoes.

In the evening there was a large attendance of Roman Catholics mingled with the Protestants at the cottage where I was to deliver my lecture. I had expected this from the little affair of the morning.

After our usual prayer and reading of a chapter from the Holy Scriptures, which on this occasion was the eighth of Hebrews, I proceeded, in my usual way, to explain the chapter generally in plain and simple language, and to make it as subsidiary as possible to the promotion of holiness of thought and feeling and life. I then dwelt more particularly on the priesthood of the Lord, as set forth in the opening verses. I laid it down, that in heaven and earth there was but one true, propitiatory, atoning sacrifice—Jesus Christ on the cross; and but one true and sacrificing priest to offer it—Jesus Christ in the heavens. I also laid it down broadly, that in “the Church militant here on earth” there was no priesthood whatever, except that spiritual priesthood which belongs to every Christian and believing man, woman and child;—that there was no especial priesthood in any special or select body of men apart from the whole number of “the faithful and elect people of God;”—that there was no priestly caste, no sacerdotal caste, possessed of any peculiar or exclusive priesthood; that the Lord Jesus Christ was the only true sacrificing priest, as He

was also the only true, atoning sacrifice for sin; and that all His believing people were, in the words of St. Peter, "a holy priesthood," and, in the language of St. Paul, "a living sacrifice." I went on to illustrate my position that our Lord Jesus Christ was the great High Priest of the Church, and the only one so designated in the Holy Scriptures. I illustrated this by verse one of the chapter before us, the eighth; wherein I read—"Wherefore in all things it behooveth him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people,"—Heb. ii. 17. "Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus." Heb. iii. 1. And again—"Seeing then that we have a great High Priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an High Priest which can not be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin,"—Heb. iv. 14. And again: "Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such an High Priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens,"—Heb. viii. 1. I said that these passages might be easily multiplied to show Jesus Christ to be the one priest of His people. And then, as was my habit, I asked whether there was any one who desired to ask any question for further information.

One of our hearers in the little affair of the morning, a zealous member of the Church of Rome, here remarked, that it had been made very plain, and no one could contradict it, by the Scriptures which had been read, that the Blessed Lord Jesus was the High Priest of the Church—that *that* was true Catholic doctrine, and the doctrine of the Catholic Church—that therefore neither he nor any Catholic could speak against it; but, he added shrewdly, that the fact of the Lord being the High Priest, did not hinder, but that there might be other priests. For example, he said, his holiness, the Pope is a bishop, but that does not prevent there being other bishops

besides, under him ; and so, though the Blessed Jesus be our great High Priest, it does not hinder, but that His clergy of His Church may be priests also under him.

I saw that the point was well understood, and well received by many of his co-religionists present, and therefore I immediately thanked him for putting the question, and especially for the manner in which he put it, adding, that this was the true way of eliciting truth—that we all, whether Protestants or Romanists, were seeking the truth for the salvation of our souls, and were bound alike to search for it, and when found, to embrace it at every hazard. This sentiment was warmly responded to.

I then proceeded to answer him, by saying, that in the whole of the gospels and epistles, indeed in the whole New Testament, there is not a single instance—not one solitary instance—in which the ministers and clergy of the Church are designated as priests, or have that term applied to them, which is usually translated priests, and which means a priest who offers sacrifice—a *sacrificing priest*. They are variously called ministers, and stewards, and pastors, and teachers, and deacons, and presbyters, and bishops, but in no instance whatever, are they designated as priests. This, I said, was a GREAT FACT on the face of Holy Scripture. I then read—"Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular. And God hath set some in the Church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues."—1 Cor. xii. 27, 28. In all this, there is no mention of a priest or a priesthood. I then read—"And he gave some, apostles ; and some, prophets ; and some, evangelists ; and some, pastors and teachers ; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ."—Eph. iv. 11, 12. There is no mention of a priest or priesthood in all this. I then read 1 Cor. iv. 1, then 1 Tim. iii. 1, then iii. 8, then Titus i. 5. I then remarked, that although they seem specially designed to describe the various offices in the Christian ministry there is no mention of that of priest, or of a priest-

hood—that this was a GREAT FACT on the face of Holy Scripture; and that these things being so, the name of priest or priesthood, ought not to be applied to the ministry of the Church. I then added that we felt that having such an High Priest, all-willing to mediate—all-powerful to intercede—all-sufficient for our necessities, we stand in need of no other priest, we want no other, and to teach that we want another, is a practical impeachment of the sufficiency of Jesus Christ.

The effect of this was considerable, especially as most of those present examined each text and handed the Bible from one to another, that all might see for themselves; and it was observed that there was no material difference between the Protestant and the Roman Catholic translations. There are few statements which have generally a stronger or more startling effect upon Roman Catholics. They seem to feel that the claim of a sacrificing priesthood is the very life-blood of their system. And that if we deprive them of this, it is like letting out their life itself; and yet there is nothing more evident than that in Holy Scripture there is no warrant whatever for such a claim. There is a presbytery. There is *not* a priesthood.*

It was after some delay, that the person, who had proposed the previous question, and to whom all his co-religionists looked for an answer to my statement, said that he thought there were places in the Scriptures, where the clergy were called priests, and their holy office called a priesthood. He held his Bible open and read 1 Peter ii. 5. He then remarked that the clergy were there called “a holy priesthood,” and then read verse 9, observing that they were called “a royal priesthood,” and then adding that in the Book of Revelations the clergy are called “kings and priests.” He said with much modesty, that he was not much of a scholar, but that he had read that in all these places, the original word was exactly the one that meant a sacrificing priesthood, and that this was the doctrine of the Catholic Church—that Jesus

* See note at the end of this conversation. Google

Christ was the High Priest, and that the clergy were the inferior priests.

"You are wrong there," exclaimed one of his own friends "for it is his holiness the Pope, the successor of the Blessed St. Peter, is the High Priest, as you said just now; the clergy are his inferior priests."

This coming from a Romanist, caused no small sensation, which interrupted us for a few moments. It had the effect of drawing out a few more remarks and bringing into a strong light, something like the foreground of a picture, the difficulty of the Romanist explaining the high priesthood of the Jews. The apostle plainly refers it to Christ. The Church of Rome as plainly refers it to the Pope.

After this interruption had passed away, I said, that it was necessary I should reply to what he had stated when he cited the two places from St. Peter and the third from the Revelation. I said that the reply was sufficiently obvious—that the title of priesthood and priest was given to all the believers, all the members of the Church—not to the clergy alone, but to the laity also—not to any one sacerdotal caste of men, but to the whole body of the people of God; to the men and to the women, to the old and to the young—to all the faithful alike. This, I went on to say, was apparent from the inscriptions of the Epistle. It is addressed, not to the clergy alone, but "to the strangers, scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia." It is thus addressed to them who were redeemed by Jesus Christ, verse 18—to them who were born again of the Spirit of God, and had purified their souls in obeying the truth, verse 22—to them who, coming as living stones, were built up into a Temple unto God, and so built up on Jesus Christ as the true rock of their foundation, ii. 5. The Epistle is addressed to all such, whether clergy or people. And, I continued, among these were both men and women, both husbands and wives, and that this was apparent from the third chapter, where both men and women are expressly mentioned, and again from the fifth chapter, where both clergy and people are mentioned. To

these, I added—to all these alike, as the faithful people of God, the appellation of a holy priesthood, and “a royal priesthood,” belonged. They were all alike, and I read the verse as I said it—they were all alike addressed by St. Peter, as a spiritual house, a chosen people, a holy nation, a peculiar people, and a royal priesthod. It is in the same sense it is used in the Book of Revelation. In Christianity there is no sacerdotal class—no priestly caste. The “holy priesthood to offer up SPIRITUAL SACRIFICES acceptable to God, by Jesus Christ,” is the office and inheritance of every believer alike, of men and women alike; it belongs to no class and no caste; and the humblest peasant man, and the lowliest peasant woman, if only they are the faithful children of Jesus Christ, are as much members of this priesthood, as the Archbishop of Canterbury, or the Bishop of Rome.

Some minutes were here given by all present to the careful examination of the places cited in this first Epistle of Peter. There was much comparing of translations, and much conversation on each point. The result was very satisfactory, as showing that several were convinced I had given the true interpretation of the Scriptures.

I said to them in conclusion, that they ought to keep in mind, that there can be no sacrifice if there be no priest; and that therefore, there can be no true sacrifice in the mass, as there is no true priest to sacrifice it. I added that on the next evening, I would open on that part of the subject. I then endeavored to improve the subject to all present, by enlarging on the comforts of having such a High Priest as Christ, to whom we could come in every time of need—to confess to Him our sins, to receive of Him forgiveness, and to ask of Him the grace to keep us in the future.

I then dwelt on his sympathy for us in all our wants, necessities, sorrows, and temptations. I called their attention particularly to the latter part of the fourth chapter of this epistle to the Hebrews, where it is said that all within us, all our inner nature was known to him—that he as God knew all that was in us, our infirmities, sorrows, trials and temptations

—that he, as man, had so to speak, a personal and experimental acquaintance with all that we require, and that thus he was a High Priest who could have compassion on our infirmities, and pity those who were astray, and sympathize with those that were under trial; and finally that with such a High Priest, we may come with confidence, with all the loving confidence of loving children, to our Heavenly Father, Saviour and God, and we shall ever find grace and mercy in our time of need. “He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them. For such an High Priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people’s: for this he did once, when he offered up himself.”—Hebrews, vii. 25–27.

I have always found that the hearts of the people were touched by simple and clear statements as to the love of God, the work of Christ, and generally as to the great truths of the Gospel. Often after the heat of the controversy has passed away, these truths come like balm upon the heart, and many a fierce eye is moistened by the big tear, and many a bold face is shaded by the hand, and many a high head is seen to hang down, and feelings are touched and hearts are warmed, and the rough hand is outstretched with words of honest thankfulness. It certainly was so on the present occasion.

NOTE.—[The Holy Scriptures frequently speak of “The Priests and Elders” of the Jews. The original words would have been more suitably translated—“The Sacrificers and Presbyters” of the Jews. The former, that is, the Priests or Sacrificers, ceased with the Jewish dispensation. Their Priesthood and Sacrifices were typical, and passed away when Jesus Christ, the true Priest and Sacrificer, was come; and exercised the office and made the atonement. The latter, that is, the Elders or Presbyters, were continued, or, more correctly speaking, their name was continued in the Christian dispensation, and applied to the Christian Ministry.

It is this word “Presbyter,” contracted into “Prestar,” and then into “Priest,” that is applied so often by us to our ministers. It is not in

the sense of *ἱερεὺς*, a *Sacrificer*, the word applied to the Jewish Priests; but in the sense of *Πρεσβυτερος*, a *Presbyter*, that we so apply it. The Romanists use it in the former sense, claiming to be Sacrificers. The Protestants use it in the latter, claiming only to be Presbyters.]

THE SACRIFICE OF THE MASS.

The Love of Controversy among the Irish Peasantry—Curious Illustration—The Sacrifice of Christ as the only Atonement inconsistent with the Doctrine of the Mass—The Sacrifice of the Mass said to be identical with that of Christ upon the Cross—Said to be a Repetition or Continuation of It—This examined or compared with Scripture—Such a Character deprives it of all its supposed Efficacy—Argument as to the Sufferings entailed upon Christ thus involved in the Mass—Several Contradictions necessarily involved in this Doctrine—Passages of Scripture examined in connection with this Subject.

THERE is a love of religious discussion, or as some may call it, a love of controversy, very remarkable among the Irish peasantry. They will go any distance—undergo any fatigue—bear any inconvenience, if only they can hear a discussion on the points at issue between the Protestant and Romish Churches; and whenever this is expected between persons supposed to be competent, there never will be wanted an ample assemblage of hearers. To such an extent does this feeling prevail, that a sermon or lecture on any points at issue, is sure to find a large number of eager, and attentive, and intelligent listeners.

That much of this peculiar disposition belongs to the race is very probable. It seems like their restlessness and pugnacity, a sort of national characteristic. It is very certain that these discussions are attended by a class of persons, thoughtless, giddy, heady, irreligious, who can hardly be supposed to listen from any deep interest in religion. And yet they do listen with intense and rapt attention.

And that much of all this love of discussion, springs from a deep well-spring of religious feeling, seems a matter of certainty. There is no other subject that commands the same influence. And as it is impossible to know the Irish peas-

antry without seeing that the religious element forms a large portion of their nature, so no one can be familiar with these discussions, without observing that the thoughtful, earnest, and good men among them, are thoroughly absorbed in the argument developed in these discussions.

And the effects of these discussions have been very striking, not only upon the religiously-disposed, but upon persons who had till then proved the enemies of all real religion. In my very large experience, I never knew a single instance of a Protestant having been led to Romanism by them, though I have known many who were awakened in such discussions to the reality of true religion. And on the other hand, I have known some hundreds of Roman Catholics, so influenced by them, as not only to embrace Protestantism, but to become earnest, devout, and holy Christians.

So intense is this desire to hear the subject discussed, that no opposition, no command, no threats from the priests, can prevent their attendance when there is a prospect of that attendance being unknown. Very frequently they so dread the malediction of the priest—they so dread a refusal to church their wives, or baptize their children, or to anoint the dying, or to marry the betrothed—they so dread a refusal to do these things for the families and relations of those who attend such discussions, that they fear to attend where there is a likelihood of their attendance becoming known to their priests; while at the same time if they are convinced they can do so without their knowledge they will be sure to be present.

A very ludicrous scene that occurred in a parish church in the South of Ireland, will illustrate this. A clergyman well-known for his eloquence, was announced to preach on some controverted doctrine. It was in a district almost exclusively Roman Catholic, and on the appointed evening the church was filled almost to suffocation by the members of the Church of Rome. As it was in the autumn of the year the shades of evening had descended and it was necessary to light the church, and the preacher could look on a dense mass of earnest and attentive men, occupying every available space. Every seat

and the floor of every pew was occupied, with at least three times the number which they originally were calculated to accommodate; while the aisle was one solid mass of men, standing with eager and fixed gaze upon the preacher, and hanging with rapt and absorbed attention upon every word that fell from his lips. All was still—it seemed as if the mass of people held their breath, lest their very breathings should disturb the voice of the preacher. Nothing else could be heard but his loving and burning words. Suddenly there was a cry at the entrance. There was a rush, and a rude demand for admission, by one endeavoring to force his way through the thick masses of the people standing in the aisle. The preacher paused. Every eye was turned toward the intruder. In a moment a cry ran through the church. “It is the priest—the priest!” In the next moment there was a voice “Put out the light, and then he can’t see us!” In an instant the active men sprung on the tops of the pews, and every light was extinguished. A low-toned voice was heard through the church, “The priest can not see us now, M——,” addressing the preacher, “you can preach away now, and we can listen in the dark.” A loud cheer even in so unsuitable a place followed this, and the preacher continued his address, while the whole assembly was wrapped in darkness, except from one small candle in the pulpit, to enable him to read the various references to the Scriptures.

The evening following that on which I had spoken on the priesthood of the Church, there was a large attendance at my cottage lecture. I had concluded the usual prayers, and had commenced to read the Holy Scriptures, when a request was made and urged with great earnestness, that I would remove my seat to the doorway, and speak there, so that those who were standing without might have an opportunity of hearing as well as those within. During the time occupied in prayer, a large and dense crowd of persons gathered around the cottage, and as there was no space within, they proposed my taking my position at the doorway, so that they all might hear alike. A deep interest seemed to pervade all, and the

desire to hear seemed universal. I gladly complied with the request.

I read the liii. chapter of Isaiah. I gave a general exposition of its subject matter, and dwelt on the divine compassion and love which it exhibited, and the obedience and gratitude it demanded of us in return. I then employed it to illustrate the subject of the evening.

I said that our subject was sacrifice—the alone sacrifice of Jesus Christ—that if there was any one truth more essentially Christian than another, it was that the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ upon the cross was the alone atoning or propitiating sacrifice for sin. All other sacrifices, as that of bulls, and goats, and calves, and lambs, under the levitical law, were but types. This was the original and antitype of all. All other sacrifices were but the shadows. This was the substance of all. It was this alone satisfied the demands of the divine law, and procured the remission and forgiveness of our sins. I added, that it was just here that the Protestant and Roman Churches were at issue. Protestants hold that there is no other sacrifice to atone or propitiate for sin. Romanists believe that what they call the Mass is a propitiatory or atoning sacrifice for the sins of both the living and the dead.

I proceeded to say that the language of the Holy Scriptures is full and explicit. It expressly states that all the preceding sacrifices were but shadows. It expressly states, that when the substance came, those shadows vanished away. The prophet describes Jesus Christ as the sacrificial victim, “who was wounded for our transgressions. He was bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we were healed : All we like sheep have gone astray, we have turned every one to his own way, and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.”—Isaiah liii. 5. One apostle says, “Christ being an High Priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building ; neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by His own blood He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal

redemption for us. For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God."—Heb. ix. 11–14. Another apostle says: "Ye know ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot."—1 Peter i. 18, 19. This is the sacrifice that *reconciles* the sinner to his God. "It pleased the Father, that in Him should all fullness dwell, and having made peace through the blood of His Cross, by Him to reconcile all things unto Himself; by Him, I say, whether they be things in earth or things in Heaven. And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath He reconciled in the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblamable and unreprouable in His sight."—Col. i. 19–22. This is the sacrifice that effects *atonement*. "God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us; much more then, being now justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him: for if when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life: and not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have received the atonement."—Rom. v. 8–12. This is the sacrifice that accomplishes *propitiation*. "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world."—1 John ii. 1, 2. Here is the language of Scripture, proclaiming, more distinctly than ever the thunders of Sinai proclaimed the law, the great and cardinal truth of the Gospel, that the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the Cross is the one sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction for the sins of man.

Having sufficiently established this position, I proceeded to make it bear on the question before us. I proceeded to show that the sacrifice of Jesus Christ being once offered, remains forever the only sacrifice or offering for sin. The language of the Holy Scriptures is as follows: "BY ONE OFFERING He hath perfected forever them that are sanctified, whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us; for after that He had said before, This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them, and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more. Now where remission of these is, *there is no more offering for sin.*"—Heb. x. 14–18. There remaineth, then, no more offering for sin. The phrase is changed a few verses afterward, where He says, "*There remaineth no more sacrifice for sins.*"—Verse 35. This language excludes all else but the death on the Cross from being a propitiatory sacrifice—a sacrifice for sin. And on language thus full and clear and explicit, I affirmed the doctrine, without which the future would frown with the blackness of despair; but with which, the future brightens with the hope of glory—a doctrine which we read in all the records of the past—which we feel in all the experience of the present—which we trace in all the predictions of the future—a doctrine of which prophets sung, which apostles preached, for which confessors suffered, for which martyrs died—the doctrine that the offering of Christ once made is the perfect redemption, propitiation, and satisfaction for all sins. And that there is no other than this—that its sufficiency excludes the necessity of any other, and that the language of Scripture absolutely excludes any other.

I argued thus: If the sacrifice of Christ upon the Cross was a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice for our sins, then do we stand in need of none other. "He," says St. John, "is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." If this be true of the sacrifice of the Cross, then there is no need of the sacrifice of the Mass. If the sacrifice of the Cross takes away all our sins,

then there are no sins for the sacrifice of the Mass to take away. And for any Church to teach that the sacrifice of the Mass does propitiate and take away our sins as efficaciously as the sacrifice of the Cross—for any Church to teach that the sacrifice of the Mass is necessary, after the sacrifice of the Cross, for the propitiation of our sins—for any Church to teach this, is all one with saying the sacrifice of the Cross was not sufficient; it is all one with saying, that it wanted the assistance of the Mass; it is all one with placing the sacrifice of the Mass on a level with the sacrifice of the Cross; it is all one with setting up the Mass as a partner or a rival to the Cross in the work of propitiation. It is an impeachment of the honor of Christ; it is an affront upon His sacrifice, it is an injury to His blood, it is a blasphemy against His Cross; it is, in the language of the Article of the Church of England, “a blasphemous fable,” and therefore “a dangerous deceit.”

When I came thus far, I paused, and in order to induce conversation, asked, whether I was fully comprehended, and whether there was any one who desired to ask a question.

My proposal was accepted by one who was in the habit of discussing such questions in the houses of the various inhabitants who were interested in these subjects.

He expressed his entire assent to all that had been stated as to the fullness of the atonement, in the sacrifice of Jesus Christ—that the doctrine of the Roman Catholic Church was precisely the same as had been described by me from the Holy Scriptures—that there was no difference whatever between the Protestants and Roman Catholics about it—that although there was no difference about the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, there was a difference between the Churches on the Mass, or as Protestants have it, the Lord's Supper. The difference is this—the Roman Catholics look on the Mass as the very same as the sacrifice of Jesus Christ—as a repetition or continuation of it; while Protestants think the Lord's Supper only the remembrance or memorial of that sacrifice. Now, he said, as we of the Church of Rome believe the sacrifice of the Mass to be one and the same—completely and identically the same as the sacrifice

on the cross, having by transubstantiation the same Jesus Christ in body and spirit the sacrificial victim, the same body killed, and the same blood shed, in every thing the same, one and identical sacrifice; we believe that, if that on the cross was a true and propitiatory and atoning sacrifice for sins, then that in the Mass must be a true and propitiatory and atoning sacrifice for sins also. Whatever we believe of one, we believe of the other, because they, by transubstantiation, are one and the same. We can see no difference whatever between them; if indeed the sacrifice of the Mass was another and distinct and different thing from the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, then it would be an implying that that of Jesus Christ was not sufficient, and required an additional sacrifice; but this is not the case in the Church of Rome, the sacrifice of the Mass is not a different or additional sacrifice, but is one and the same identically with the sacrifice of the Cross. The ceremony performed by our priest in our chapel, is the very same as the scene performed on Mount Calvary, and is in reality a repetition or continuation of it; its substance by transubstantiation is the very same, and, therefore, its value for propitiation or atonement for sin must be the very same.

I asked, as he concluded, whether he meant to identify the sacrifice of the Mass with the sacrifice of Jesus Christ—to identify the ceremony performed by the modern Roman priests with the crucifixion perpetrated by the ancient Roman soldiers—to identify the services of the Church of Rome with the awful tragedy upon Calvary? I asked this with the view of fixing the minds of all present upon the real nature of the doctrine.

He replied in the affirmative, adding, that the Church believed in transubstantiation, and that this made *the sacrifice of the Mass* the same as *the sacrifice on the cross*.

"I do not believe that," exclaimed one of the Roman Catholics, "for in the Mass there is no cross at all; and even when the priest holds up the blessed Jesus in his hands, and elevates the Host for us to adore, there is no cross, except the sign of the cross which he makes with his hand; there is no

crucifixion—no thieves on either side, and above all, no blessed Virgin at his feet, no, nor any soldiers to mock and run the long spear into his side.” This was spoken with all the seriousness of an earnest man.

“Neither do I believe it,” added another, amid the sensation created by this objection, “for the Blessed Mother of God was at the crucifixion, and so was the holy Magdalene; it was then the sword pierced through and through the heart of the blessed Virgin herself, and there is nothing of all that in the Mass; if the Mass were the same as the crucifixion, surely the blessed Virgin would be there.” This was said with great energy of manner.

“And sure she is there,” said another Romanist, in a voice that savored of sly irony, “she is there—in the picture over the altar.”

A titter ran through the room, at the tone in which this was uttered, and I hastened to repress it; such occasions are constantly occurring among a people whose love of a smart saying can not be stifled even by the gravest and most serious subjects. They are intensely religious, but at the same time intensely humorous.

I said that the statement made by our Roman Catholic friend was of the gravest kind, and deserved our gravest examination. He had said that the sacrifice of the Mass by the priest is identically the same as the sacrifice of Jesus Christ by the soldiers. This makes one as precious, as meritorious, as influential, as acceptable with God in propitiation or atonement for sins as the other. Indeed, if they are one and the same, then if the sacrifice on the cross was able to save a lost and sinful world, the same will be equally true of the sacrifice of the Mass—it will be able to save a lost and ruined world.

I was here interrupted by a Protestant, who said, “If the sacrifice of the Cross has saved us by having made atonement for the sins of all them that believe, there can be no necessity for the sacrifice of the Mass to do it over again; I understood *that* to be the argument first stated, that to offer the sacrifice

of the Mass in order to propitiate or atone for sins, was to imply the insufficiency or inefficacy of the work done by the sacrifice of the cross which preceded it."

I continued to say, that such was my argument, and that our friend had not answered it by saying that the sacrifice of the cross, and the sacrifice of the Mass were the same; for it is clear, that if the sacrifice of the cross were sufficient, there can be no need of any repetition or continuation. However, I added, we may as well confute it.

Our first argument, to prove that the sacrifice of the Mass is not a repetition or continuation of the sacrifice of the Cross, is this: The Scriptures expressly state, that our Lord was to die once, and only once—that His death was never to be repeated—and that by that one death, the whole propitiation or atonement was perfected.

The Scriptures, which teach this, are many and explicit. We refer to the following: "Christ being raised from the dead, dieth no more: death hath no more dominion over Him. For in that He died, He died unto sin once, but in that He liveth, he liveth unto God."—Rom. vi. 9, 10. These words exclude all repetition of his death, for "He died unto sin *once*," and "He dieth *no more*." We then refer to the following place: "Nor yet that He should offer Himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with the blood of others; for then must He often have suffered since the foundation of the world; but now, once in the end of the world, hath He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment, so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time, without sin unto salvation."—Heb. ix. 25–28. It is here stated, that He was *once* offered as a sacrifice for sin, and that He was not to be offered *often*; which utterly excludes the possibility of His being offered in the sacrifice of the Mass. We again refer to the following Scripture: "We are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. And every priest standeth daily minister-

ing and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins; but this man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins, forever sat down on the right hand of God, from henceforth expecting till His enemies be made his footstool. For by one offering He hath perfected forever them that are sanctified."—Heb. x. 10–14. In these words there is still that remarkable reiteration of Christ being *once* offered, and that by that offering "*once* for all," the whole work of propitiation has been perfected. It looks like the forecastings of Infinite Wisdom—it looks like the anticipations of Omniscience—it looks as if the Holy Spirit had foreseen the evil and prepared the remedy. The inference is legitimate, that the death of Jesus Christ was not to be repeated—that His death was not to be continued, for He arose from the dead—that the offering on the cross was not to be continued, for he was taken down from the cross; and, therefore, that the sacrifice of the Mass is neither a repetition nor a continuation of the sacrifice of the Cross.

I had scarcely concluded, when our opposing friend again broke in, saying, that the sacrifice of the Mass was not a *repetition*, but a *continuation* of the sacrifice of the Cross.

One of the Protestants present, a very aged and venerable-looking man, with long snow-white hair streaming upon his shoulders, one thoroughly versed in the Scriptures, and universally respected for his personal piety, now stood up, and resting both his hands on his staff and leaning forward upon it, as with the weakness of many years, he said, it was very sad, that men, in speaking about God and their souls, should make so much of difference between a repetition and a continuation, or rather a continuation that was not a repetition. When men were arguing in that way it seldom led to any good results, either in the speakers or in the hearers. But, he said, that it appeared to his simple judgment, that as each mass is in itself a distinct and separate ceremony—as each mass has a beginning and an end—as each mass is performed at different hours and different days, and in different parishes and different lands, and by different priests, and for different

congregations, so they can not be a continuation, but a repetition. It is a repetition of the same ceremony again and again. And when the priests demand money for masses for the repose of the souls of the dead, they always count the number of distinct and separate masses, as being distinct and separate repetitions of the same ceremony. They always count as one or ten or twenty masses, and not as one continuing mass. But in any light such repeated or continual sacrifices can not be effectual to take away sin. Even if we were to suppose that the mass is a sacrifice offered upon the altars of Rome, year by year, and day by day, continually, such a supposition—zealously as they contend for it—would be a death-blow to the propitiatory character assumed for it. It is the record of Revelation, that those “sacrifices, which are offered year by year continually, *can never make the comers thereunto perfect.*”—Heb. x. 1. And again: “Every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, *which can never take away sin.*”—Heb. x. 11. If, then, the sacrifice of the Mass is the same sacrifice, offered year by year continually—if it is a sacrifice ministered daily and offered oftentimes—if, in short, the sacrifice of the Mass is that which they would persuade us it is—namely, a repetition or continuation of the sacrifice of the Cross, yearly and daily offered—then, on their own showing—on their own principle—the sacrifice of the Mass can not be a propitiatory sacrifice; it is a sacrifice that “can never take away sin.”

There was something in the manner and matter of this address, especially as coming from a very aged man, and one of their own class, that had a striking effect on all present. An argument well expressed and coming from one of their own class has always great weight among the peasantry. They seem to feel a kind of pride in it; and though, perhaps, opposed to their opinions, they yet feel pleased at its coming from one of themselves. And certainly, on the present occasion, there was no disposition to reply to it. In the silence that ensued, I resumed the subject.

I stated that there was another argument on this point, and

reminded them that it had been stated that the sacrifice of the Mass was identically the same as the sacrifice of the Cross. On this I argued—if this be true, then our Lord Jesus Christ must suffer all the agonies of the sacrifice of the Cross every time He is offered in the sacrifice of the Mass. This argument is founded on the words of the apostle, where he says that Christ was to be offered but once. “Nor yet that He should offer Himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with the blood of others; for then must He often have suffered since the foundation of the world; but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.” It is here stated that Christ was to be offered but once, and that if He was *offered often*, then He must have *suffered often*. As He could not be offered as a sacrifice for sin without suffering and death, so if He was often offered as a sacrifice for sin, He must often have been exposed to suffering and death. Now the sufferings and agonies of Jesus on the cross, were beyond the tongue of men and angels to describe; they were infinite as the sins of man for which He suffered, and the justice of God which He satisfied. And the words of the apostle imply, that, if the sacrifice of the cross was *often offered*, then all these infinite sufferings must have been as *often inflicted* on Jesus Christ. I therefore argued that if the sacrifice of the Mass be indeed a repetition or continuation of the sacrifice of the Cross, then must Jesus Christ be exposed to all the agonies and horrors of that death, every time the sacrifice of the Mass is offered: or in the words of the apostle, “then He must often have suffered since the foundation of the world.”

I anticipated an answer to this. The members of the Church of Rome feel the argument keenly, as it implies a cruelty and a wickedness in their priests and in themselves to repeat or continue the sufferings of Christ; and yet if the sacrifice of the Mass be a repetition or a continuation of the sacrifice of the Cross, it seems difficult to avoid the accusation. I felt, therefore, that there would be some attempt at an answer,

and as I was aware of the answers usually attempted, I was prepared to reply.

The intelligent person who had already spoke for the Church of Rome, at once replied, that there could be no sufferings in the sacrifice of the Mass, because that it was all mystical—all unreal, for that in the Mass Jesus Christ was not put to death really, but only mystically—that the sacrificial knife was not real, but only mystical—that the shedding of His blood was not real but only mystical—that the sufferings were not real, but only mystical. Now, he argued, the charge of cruelty and wickedness must fall to the ground, as the whole sacrifice is unreal and only mystical. There is neither cruelty nor wickedness ; and as for the Holy Scripture where it is said, that if He be offered often, “then He must often have suffered,” it is plain that St. Paul is speaking of real offerings, and therefore of real sufferings ; but this has nothing to do with the sacrifice of the Mass, which is not real, but only mystical.

“Why, man alive !” exclaimed one of his very zealous co-religionists, “sure that is as bad as the doctrine of the Protestants themselves !”

The laugh created by this naïve exclamation, led to several remarks, more or less irrelevant. I quieted them, by reminding them of the solemnity and importance of the subject, and said that the exclamation as to the Protestantism of this doctrine, had considerable truth in it. The doctrine of the Church of Rome was, that the Mass was “a true and proper and propitiatory sacrifice for sins,” and the argument of our Roman Catholic friend was that it was an unreal and mystical sacrifice ! I confessed myself unable to reconcile the two statements—that by transubstantiation Jesus Christ is really and substantially the victim, but that the killing and dying and suffering are only unreal and mystical—that the priesthood who offers, is real and true, and that the offering and knife and cross, are only unreal and mystical—that when we allude to transubstantiation, all is declared to be *real and substantial*, and when we allude to the sacrifice of the Mass, all is explained as *unreal and mystical* ! I confessed that I could not understand

the inconsistency of all this, and felt that all must be taken literally, and this would imply a literal presence, a literal victim, a literal death, and literal sufferings, or all should be taken figuratively, and then there would be a figurative presence, a figurative victim, a figurative death, and figurative sufferings, and this would annihilate transubstantiation. The truth is, I added, the doctrine of transubstantiation, and the doctrine of the Mass contradict each other, and they can not be reconciled.

Our friend replied again, that so far from contradicting the sacrifice of the Mass, the doctrine of transubstantiation was its chief and real foundation. The bread and the wine are changed at the mysterious words of the priest, into the true and substantial body and blood of the blessed Jesus, and this is the foundation of the Mass; but, he added, he would not argue that point now, but would say, that in the sacrifice of the Mass there are no sufferings, for there is no shedding of blood; this is the real point of the argument; it was argued that if the sacrifice of the Mass, was the same as the sacrifice of the Cross, then it would be a wickedness and cruelty to be putting the Blessed Saviour to a repetition or continuation of his sufferings. "Now, I have said," he continued, "that the sufferings in the Mass are not real sufferings but only mystical, and I now say further, that there can be no real sufferings where the blood is not shed; and in the sacrifice of the Mass, there is no shedding of blood. The Roman Catholic Church teaches that the sacrifice of the Mass is an *unbloody* sacrifice—that the Saviour is there *unbloodily* offered—that He is sacrificed in an *unbloody* manner. The Church has taught this over and over again, in the Council of Trent, and even in the children's catechisms, and therefore, since the Mass is an *unbloody* sacrifice it follows that there are no sufferings.

I felt now that the argument was in precisely that state in which I could deal with the question so as to tell upon the popular mind, by giving that kind of answer that at once lays hold of the mind of the people;—an answer, not subtle or refined, but plain, broad, strong and striking. I have so often observed its success on other occasions, that I felt confident of its effect now.

I said that I would make three observations on what had been stated so well, so clearly, and so temperately.

The *first* observation was, that the argument of our friend had been that the sacrifice of the Mass was the very same identically with the sacrifice of Jesus Christ upon the Cross; but now we learn, that so far from being identically the same, they are widely different; *that* on the Cross was a bloody sacrifice, while *that* in the Mass is an unbloody sacrifice; *that* on the cross was a suffering sacrifice, while *that* in the Mass is not a suffering sacrifice. The sacrifice on the Cross was a sacrifice unto a real death, while that in the Mass is a sacrifice with only a mystical death! Thus having commenced with telling us that the sacrifice of the Mass was identically the same as the sacrifice of the Cross, we are now to learn that so far from being identically the same, they actually differ on those particulars that more than all else constitute the essence of a sacrifice—the shedding of blood, the endurance of suffering, and the infliction of death! All these, we know, were in the sacrifice of the Cross, and none of these, we are told, are in the sacrifice of the Mass! And yet they tell us, that they are one and the same—identically the same!

The *second* remark which should be impressed on all is, that if the Mass be an unbloody sacrifice it can not be a propitiatory or atoning sacrifice for sin. Every one conversant with the doctrine of sacrifice, as revealed in the Scriptures, is aware that atonement and forgiveness are unalterably connected *with the shedding of the blood of the sacrificial victim*. It would occupy too much time to open this principle as fully as it deserves, but it is sufficient for our present purpose, to remark that Moses lays it down in the Old Testament, that “*it is the blood that maketh atonement for the soul.*”—Lev. xvii. 11: and that St. Paul lays it down in the New Testament, that “*without shedding of blood there is no remission.*”—Heb. ix. 22. The doctrine of the Scriptures is, that there can be “no atonement,” and that there can be “no remission of sins” unless there be the blood of sacrifice. And yet the advocates of Rome confess that the Mass is an “*unbloody sacrifice*,” and

thus confess, that in it there can be no atonement or "remission of sins!" They had told us, that the Mass was a propitiatory—an expiatory—an atoning sacrifice; and now, as if all this had faded from their memory—they labor with untiring assiduity to persuade us, it is only "an unbloody sacrifice." And therefore, on their own showing, it is a sacrifice without propitiation, expiation, or atonement.

But the *third* and last observation I would make on the statement that the Mass is an *unbloody* sacrifice, is, that it establishes a plain inconsistency with the doctrine of transubstantiation. It brings these two doctrines, the Mass and Transubstantiation, two chief and cardinal doctrines of the Church of Rome, into broad and unmistakable opposition. According to the doctrine of the Mass, it is an unbloody sacrifice. In order to escape the charge of cruelty and wickedness in continuing or repeating the sufferings of the Cross, they say, that the sacrifice of the Mass is unbloody. It is so described in the Council of Trent: it is so described in the children's catechisms, it has been so described by our friend here this evening. It is an unbloody sacrifice: there is no blood. But we are also told of transubstantiation that the bread and wine are transubstantiated into the very, true, substantial body and blood of Jesus Christ; and that it is thus that they have Him as the sacrificial victim, whole and entire, on their altars. They have no longer bread and wine. They have only the body and the blood. If then all is blood, and nothing but blood: if all the wine be turned into blood, and nothing remains but blood, how can they say that in the Mass there is no blood—that it is an *unbloody* sacrifice! When they are defending transubstantiation, all is *bloody*; when they are defending the sacrifice of the Mass, all is *unbloody*!

This acted like magic upon my hearers. They gave the most unmistakable evidence of their feeling; and in a moment, when I paused to let it have its full effect, and to give any one an opportunity for reply, the whole number, both of Protestants and Romanists, were speaking in low whispers. It was soon apparent that there was a deep impression made

upon all, and that there would be no further reply. I therefore made some general remarks with the view of impressing as far as I could, all present with a deep sense of the love of Him who left the heavens for us, and bled and suffered and died a sacrifice for our sins; and of the necessity for all of us to lay aside all other ground of hope—all self-dependence or self-righteousness—all dependence on rites or ceremonies, and to rest in faith and hope and love upon that which would be found in the great day to be the only atonement for sin.

NOTE.—There are certain texts sometimes cited by Roman Catholics to justify their doctrine, that the mass is “a true, proper, propitiatory, and atoning sacrifice for sin.”

I. One of these places is Acts xiii. 2, where it is said of some of the Christian prophets and teachers [there is no mention of either bishops or priests], that they “ministered to the Lord.” On this they argue that the word “ministered” in the original means “sacrificed,” or “offered sacrifice,” and that these words imply that these Christians offered the sacrifice of the Mass. The answer to this is—

That the original word means nothing of the kind, but simply any public or official service, whether civil or religious. Accordingly it is applied in Rom. xiii. 6, to the civil magistrate collecting the taxes or tribute. Again, it is applied in 2 Cor. ix. 12, to the Christian distributing the money collected for their poorer brethren. Again, it is applied in Heb. i. 14 to the angels sent to minister to the heirs of salvation. Again, in Rom. xv. 27, it is applied to those who were bound in Christian fellowship, “to minister in carnal things,” that is, in money, to those who had brought to them the spiritual blessings of the Gospel.

That according to those places, the word means any public or private service; and therefore, in the place cited, it merely means that the Christian prophets and teachers were assembled together in some religious service. The place makes no allusion whatever to sacrifice, and certainly not to the sacrifice of the Mass.

But as they could not find the sacrifice of the Mass already in the Holy Scriptures, the translators of the French Bible, called “the Bordeaux Bible,” were resolved to place it there; and by an outrageous falsification, which was nothing less than sacrilege, they translated this place, “As they offered unto the Lord **THE SACRIFICE OF THE MASS**, and fasted,” etc. They thus inserted the words, “the sacrifice of the Mass,” so as to deceive the people into the belief that they had the

authority of Holy Scripture for their doctrine! They were afraid to do this in a Bible-reading land like England.

II. They often refer to Gen. xiv. 18, where Melchizedek is described as meeting Abraham and his people returning from the rescue of Lot. The narrative states that Melchizedek "brought forth *bread and wine*; and he was a priest of the Most High God, and blessed Abraham." On these words they argue, that Melchizedek, because he was a priest, brought forth bread and wine to offer in sacrifice—just like the sacrifice of the Mass. The answer to this which I have found generally effective, is—

That Melchizedek brought this bread and wine to welcome and refresh Abraham and his people, after their night expedition. And that Josephus, the Jewish historian, narrates the circumstance in that way. And certainly there is in the narrative nothing whatever to suggest the idea of sacrifices. His Priesthood is mentioned to account for his blessing Abraham, and not on account of any sacrifice of bread and wine. But in the Romish translation of the place, they have most improperly departed from the original Hebrew, and rendered the words—"And he was a Priest," by "*for he was a Priest.*"

That even supposing there was a sacrifice of bread and wine, and that this sacrifice was, as they assert, a type of the sacrifice of the Mass; it would then prove, that the mass was a sacrifice of merely *bread and wine*. Transubstantiation would be necessarily overthrown; and the Mass prove, after all, no more than mere *bread and wine*!

III. They refer frequently to Mal. i. 11, where in allusion to the times of the Messiah—to Christian times, it is foretold that among the Gentiles "incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering." On this they argue that it implies, that there was to be "a pure offering," or oblation among the Gentiles; and that this must allude to the offering of the sacrifice of the Mass. The answer to this is—

That incense under the law was a type of prayer; and David therefore says—"Let my prayer be set before thee as incense;" and that a pure offering was the type of the offering of Jesus Christ, for the salvation of the Gentiles as well as the Jews. And thus the prophecy is merely describing the character of our Gentile times, that among them, "from the rising of the sun to the going down of the same;"—that is, from East to West through the world, the Gentiles would yet be presenting their prayers to the true God, and rest for the true atonement of their sins upon the sacrifice of Jesus the Messiah.

That in strict fulfillment of all this prediction, the nations that have been converted to Christianity in the East and in the West, are now, in the language of the Apostle, Rom. xii. 1—"presenting their bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God." There is not here a word about the Mass.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER OF ST. JOHN.

A Conversation on our Lord's Words in this Chapter—The Romish Interpretation—The Protestant Explanation—The Allusion to the Ascension, and the Argument derived from it—The Ancient Fathers not unanimous on it, according to the Council of Trent—The Opinions of Eusebius, Tertullian, Augustine, Origen, as to the Meaning of this Discourse—Augustine's Explanation of the Allusion to the Ascension—Evidence against the Literal Interpretation—The Argument connected with the coming down from Heaven—Difficulties to the Church of Rome herself, arising from her own Interpretation.

It is seldom that a female makes an effective controversialist. The eager and impulsive tendency of her nature—the instinct, the passion, and the feeling that belongs to her, are too intense for the war of argument; and she is sure to lay herself open to the wary, watchful, and subtle opponent.

In a considerable town, in the west of Ireland, resided a female, whose controversial reputation, in that locality, was of the first magnitude. She was the proprietor of the principal establishment of a mercantile kind in the town, and thus was possessed of wealth and position which gave to her a certain amount of local influence; and this in some sort gave strength to her controversial lore. She was a member of the Church of Rome, a kind, charitable, good woman, pious and religious according to her principles, and esteemed and respected, because she deserved it, in every relation of life. Her one failing—and yet it was that which created her fame—was a love of controversy. It was impossible to buy a ribbon, or to purchase a cap, without her finding some opportunity of saying a word for the Roman Church; and she could not try on a shawl or dispose of a veil without giving some wound to the Protestant religion. Intolerable as this would ordinarily be,

yet persons learned to bear with it, from sincere respect for her general character. They looked upon it as an oddity or peculiarity to be pardoned.

I had been on a visit with some friends in the country, about six or seven miles from the town. And as some of them were obliged to go there one day to make some purchases, they proposed I should accompany them. They told me beforehand that this female controversialist knew me by name, and had expressed a wish to see me, and that I must, therefore, be prepared for an attack on her part.

We met; purchases were made, and, as not unusual, some purchases were exchanged for others. By some means or other she managed to make some incidental allusion to the change in transubstantiation. It is impossible now to say how precisely the allusion arose, but she managed to drag in the subject. Perhaps the lady whom I had accompanied, and at whose house I was staying, was mischievous, but certainly she noticed the allusion with, as it seemed to me, the purpose of involving me; at all events, one thing led to another, till our female controversialist expressed her fear that I did not believe in Transubstantiation.

I said very gently, and kindly, and courteously, that I was unable to believe it;—that whether it was some skeptical tendencies in my mind, or some mental malformation that incapacitated me from receiving that dogma;—that whether it was a defect in the evidence for it, or a defect in myself and my prejudices, it was very certain I had never been able to see it in the same light that it appeared to her.

She spoke in the same spirit, and said, that every object we look at varies very much according to the light in which we view it, or the point from which we see it. This silk, she said, taking up a piece of shot silk, if seen in one light is a beautiful brown, and seen in another, is a lovely lilac.

This illustration, I said, seemed to imply that possibly we might both be right, and that our difference was only a difference of position! And then, I added expressively, there could be no reason for excluding either party from the privileges

and graces—from the forgiveness and salvation of the Church of God! On this principle exclusive salvation is a folly and a crime.

She saw at a glance the point of my words, and felt the mistake she had made; but said, with great readiness, that her allusion applied to different views of the same truths, not to a faithful reception and an unbelieving rejection of one;—to different views of, for example, the real presence, not to a positive rejection of it altogether. She then said, gently and suggestively, that she supposed I rejected altogether the doctrine of Transubstantiation.

I bowed assent, adding, that I could not believe it.

She smiled gently, and expressed surprise it should be so, as Protestants so frequently spoke of deriving every thing from the Holy Scriptures; and our Lord said expressly—"Verily, verily I say unto you, except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him."—John vi. 53-56. There is Scripture at all events to justify our belief in transubstantiation.

I replied, by reminding her that the silk that seemed brown at one moment appeared lilac at another. And that these words when taken alone and without explanation might seem to have one sense, but when viewed in connection with our Lord's explanation immediately after, they appeared in a totally different light. Now what was our Lord's explanation? His disciples evidently misunderstood Him, and murmured at His words, which, taken literally, seemed harsh and unnatural and revolting; for the idea of their eating him—the idea of taking blood, which was expressly forbidden by their law—the idea of their becoming cannibals, was unnatural and revolting to their feelings. He therefore at once corrected them, saying they should have seen that his words were spiritual and living words—"It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh

profiteth nothing ; the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.”—Verse 63. Our Lord thus corrects their error in having understood Him in a literal or fleshly sense. He tells them that such a sense was unprofitable, and that His words should be understood in a spiritual and living sense, in other words, in a figurative sense.

She listened to this with a smile of intense satisfaction—a smile that betrayed her acquaintance with it before, and her own feeling of pleasure in the opportunity now afforded her of answering it. She said, in a tone of great triumph, with a sort of inward laugh, that such could not have been the meaning of our Lord, for that He shows He intended to imply a miracle—a wonderful miracle—a miracle greater than even His ascension ; for He adds, when the disciples murmured—“Doth this offend you ? What ! and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where He was before ?”—Verse 61. Thus implying that they ought not to murmur at the miracle of Transubstantiation—at their eating thereby His flesh and blood—inasmuch as they were soon destined to witness the wonderful miracle of His ascension to Heaven. When they should see a miracle like that, they would no longer doubt the miracle of Transubstantiation.

She seemed delighted with this argument, which certainly was sufficiently ingenious. But the expression of her face entirely changed when I said as before, that as the silk looked brown in one aspect and lilac in another, so there was a totally different view of this passage, namely, the view taken of it by all the fathers and saints of the primitive Church.

She eagerly interrupted me, and asked what it was.

I replied, that I was going to describe it ; and that as her Church professed such profound reverence for the fathers and saints of primitive times, the St. Augustines and St. Athanasiiuses, so I was sure she would bow to their interpretation. They state, that when the disciples murmured at His words, He asked them, “Doth this offend you ?” that is, does this language lead you to err and fall—does this language lead you astray ? and then he added, “What ! ye shall see the Son of

man ascend up where He was before." When you see Him ascend into *Heaven*, you may be sure you can not eat or drink Him on *earth*—you shall see Him ascend into Heaven, and therefore you can never think of eating literally His flesh, or drinking literally His blood. He will be enthroned in the heaven of heavens, and how can you so foolishly think that I meant you were to eat me on earth? And thus our Lord's words, alluding to His ascension, are an argument of his own against the notion of literally eating and drinking Him; and having thus argued against this, He adds, that assuredly they ought to have seen that His words were not to be understood in a fleshly sense, but in a spiritual sense, "It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life." Now, I added, that this was the interpretation which the old fathers and saints of the primitive Church took of this allusion to the Ascension, and that I must confess my agreement with them.

She listened to this with great attention; it was evidently new to her; she was wholly unprepared with an answer. And my statement, that it was the opinion of the primitive Church, had its weight with her; she mused on it for some moments, while my friend and myself exchanged amused glances at her perplexity. She then said very gently, that she had never heard that view of the allusion to the Ascension before, and that she was not then prepared to answer it, but that she would do so when she saw me again, which she hoped would be very soon.

We parted for the time.

I saw her again a few days afterward, and I brought with me a small manuscript-book in which I had copied a variety of passages I had met with in the writers of the primitive Church. This little volume was to me a very constant and useful companion for many years, owing to the strong feeling of reverence in which any thing from the fathers and saints of the primitive times, is regarded among the Roman Catholics. As soon as I saw my fair antagonist, I reminded her of my ar-

gument in our preceding conversation—that I had argued that the words of our Lord, as to eating his flesh and drinking his blood, were to be interpreted figuratively, and also that his allusion to the ascension into heaven, was designed by him as an argument against the literal interpretation, a *divine argument of our Lord himself against the doctrine of Transubstantiation.*

She replied that she had a perfect recollection of what had passed, and she added, with a very arch and skeptical expression, that she recollected how I had said that the fathers and saints of the primitive Church agreed with me.

I said she was perfectly correct, and that I had brought with me for her, the opinions to which I referred. I then read from *Eusebius.*

“Verily, verily, I say unto you, whoso eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, abideth in me and I in him. When He was *mystically* saying these and similar things, some of his disciples said to him, ‘This is a hard saying, who can hear it?’ And in reply to them, our Saviour says, ‘Doth this offend you? What, and if you shall see the Son of Man ascend up where he was before. It is the Spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing, the word that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life.’ By these words he designed to teach them that what they had heard of his flesh and blood was to be understood *in a spiritual sense*, as if he had said, Do not think that I am speaking of the flesh with which I am surrounded, as if you ought to eat that, nor imagine that you are to drink of my sensible and corporal blood, but you must clearly understand that the words which I speak unto you are spirit and life; so that his words and discourses are flesh and blood, and if a man eat of them, as feeding on celestial food, he shall be a partaker of life eternal. Therefore, says He, let not this offend you, which I have said about eating my flesh and drinking my blood, nor be troubled at the superficial bearing of what I said of meat and drink; for these, if understood carnally, will be unprofitable, for it is the Spirit that quickeneth those *who understand them spiritually.*” B. 3. Eccl. Theol.

I remarked simply, that there was no mistaking the meaning of this father, and I then read from *Tertullian*.

"They thought his discourses were harsh and intolerable, as if he had determined that they were truly to eat his flesh; he premises, in order to describe the state of salvation in the spirit: 'it is the Spirit that quickeneth,' and then he adds, 'the flesh profiteth nothing,' that is, for quickening, 'the words which I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life,' as he had already said—'Whoso heareth my words and believeth on Him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life,' thereby declaring his discourses to be that which quickeneth, for his discourses are spirit and life. He declares the same discourse to be also his flesh, for his discourse was made his flesh, and for that reason it is to be sought and eaten by hearing, and chewed by the understanding, and digested by faith; for a little before, he had pronounced his flesh to be heavenly meat, urging still *under the figures of necessary food*, the remembrance of their fathers." De Resur.

I only observed to her on this that it showed how those writers interpreted this subject figuratively. I then read from *Athanasius*.*

"When our Lord spake of the eating of his body, and when he saw that many were offended, he forthwith added, 'Does this offend you? What, and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before. It is the spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing, the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life.' Both these things, the flesh and the spirit, he said respecting himself; and he distinguishes the spirit from the flesh, *in order to teach men that his words were not carnal but spiritual*; for to how many persons, think you, could his body have been literally food, so as to be food for the whole world? In order to turn away their minds from carnal thoughts, and *that they might learn*

* The originals of this place from Athanasius, as also of the other fathers here cited, will be found in Usher's reply to Malone. Google

that the flesh that he would give them was heavenly and spiritual food, he on this account mentioned the ascent of the Son of man to heaven."

Such was the interpretation of this celebrated saint, and I then read as follows, from *Augustine* :

"Christ taught his disciples and said to them : 'It is the spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing. The words which I spake unto you, they are spirit and they are life,' as if He had said—*understand spiritually what I have spoken*. You are not about to eat this identical body which you see, nor to drink this identical blood, which they who crucify me will pour out. On the contrary, I have commanded a certain sacrament unto you, which shall vivify you *if spiritually understood* ; for though it must be celebrated visibly, yet it must be understood invisibly." In *Psa. 98*.

This was sufficient as to the opinion of this greatest of all the fathers. I then read from *Origen*.

"You must know that they are *figures*, which are written in the sacred volume, and therefore as spiritual and not as carnal persons, examine and understand what is said ; for if you understand them carnally they will be injurious to you, and will not nourish you. There is a letter that killeth him *who does not interpret in a spiritual sense what is said*, for if you follow according to the letter this saying, 'Unless ye eat my flesh and drink my blood,' *it is a letter that killeth*."—In *Levit. hom. 7*.

Having read these several extracts, I remarked that they showed very clearly that these fathers and saints of the primitive Church adopted the *figurative* and not the *literal* interpretation of this discourse of our Lord ; that they adopted the interpretation which Protestants give, and rejected that which Romanists give, to this remarkable chapter.

She merely said, in reply to this, that she believed that in the writings of these very fathers and saints there were passages which gave the opposite interpretation, agreeing altogether with the Church of Rome ; that she had seen such passages often quoted in books ; but that, of course, she could

not be expected to be able to argue on that point. She was sure, however, that her priest could easily satisfy me on the subject.

I replied that I certainly could not expect her to be familiar with writers whose works were all either Greek or Latin ; but that, if these writers wrote those passages which I had cited, and also wrote those passages directly opposite, to which she alluded, it only proved that they were very inconsistent men ; —that these fathers and saints, as they were called, were very inconsistent Christians thus to write on both sides ; and therefore were scarcely fit persons to govern us in our interpretation of the Scriptures. I added pleasantly, that her creed contained a clause that she would “ never interpret Scripture otherwise than according to the *unanimous* interpretations of the ancient fathers ;” and that the Council of Trent had expressly acknowledged that, as to the purport of this sixth chapter of St. John, the ancient fathers are not-unanimous !

She took this in very good part, smiling pleasantly at it ; so I felt that I could go a step further. I reminded her that in our former conversation she had argued that our Lord’s allusion to His ascension was in order to remove the doubts of His hearers—that when they should witness the wonder of His ascension they need no longer doubt the wonder of transubstantiation. She assented to this ; and I then reminded her that I had argued on the other hand, that He had alluded to his ascension in order to show them that they ought not to understand his words in a literal sense ; for that when He would ascend to heaven and sit enthroned there, and be their Priest and Advocate and Mediator, then they could not have Him bodily on earth, to be literally and substantially eating his body and drinking his blood. This, I said, was my argument and explanation of this allusion. And now I added that SAINT AUGUSTINE was my authority for this argument. He says :

“ Our Lord answers—‘ Doth this offend you ? ’ I said I would give you my Flesh to eat, and my Blood to drink ; does it offend you ? ‘ What and if you shall see the Son of Man

ascend up where He was before? What is the meaning of this? By this He explains what they knew not, and lays open the reason of their being offended; for they imagined that He would give to them His body: and therefore He said He would ascend to heaven entire. *When you shall see the Son of Man ascend into heaven, then you will see certainly that He gives not his body in the way you imagine.* 'It is the spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing. The words that I spake unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.' What is the meaning of this, 'they are spirit and they are life?' *That they are to be understood spiritually.* Dost thou understand them *spiritually*, then they are spirit and life. Dost thou understand them *carnally*, then, though they are spirit and life, yet they are not so to thee," in Joh. Tract 27.

Again, St. Augustine says:

"Some of his disciples, yet not all, but very many, were offended, saying one to another, 'This is a hard saying; who can hear it?' Now, when our Lord perceived this, and heard their murmurings and thoughts, He answers them, in order that they might understand that He had heard them, and that they might cease from such thoughts; but what was his answer? 'Doth this offend you? what and if ye shall see the Son of Man ascend up where He was before?' Now, what does He mean by these words—'Doth this offend you?' *Do you imagine that I shall make parts of this my body which you see, and that I shall take my members to pieces, to give them to you?* 'What, and if ye shall see the Son of Man ascend up where He was before?' *It is certain, that He who has ascended, whole, can not be eaten.*"—De Verb. Apoc. Sermo 2.

On reading these, which certainly surprised my antagonist, I said, that there could be no doubt as to the meaning of this celebrated father and saint; he explained the allusion to the ascension, as I had done, and thus this argument against transubstantiation is an argument *invented by our Lord himself*, and urged by him *against transubstantiation*. It is not an inference drawn from his words, but is *an argument divinely*

formed, and divinely urged by our Lord himself; and it simply is, that instead of interpreting his words of eating his flesh, and drinking his blood in a literal sense, they should see that the thing was an impossibility, for as He was to ascend *bodily to heaven*, so they could not have him to eat *bodily upon earth*.*

I must do my fair opponent the justice to say, that she bore all this with great patience, she listened with the closest attention—showed she fully saw and comprehended my meaning—made some just and natural comments, but made no effort to weaken the force of my argument. She was evidently unprepared for such a mass of evidence, and very frankly acknowledged her inability to answer it, further than by saying that there were other reasons operating on her mind, which forced her to an opposite interpretation of our Lord's discourse; she said that she had read much, and argued much on it, and her opinion was fully formed, and could not be easily changed, and certainly not by any thing I had offered, though she admitted it was very new and very interesting; but, she added gently and feelingly, that she often felt that she was right, when she could not prove it.

The earnestness, simplicity, and sincerity of her manner, in saying this, could not be lost upon me: I fully appreciated it, and in a very few minutes we were established mutually in each other's confidence; differing widely as the poles in our views, we yet felt that we could speak fully and frankly to each other, and I resolved to avail myself of it; so after a short conversation on the importance of true religiousness, and of nobly and faithfully living on Christ, and living for Christ, I took occasion to revert to our original subject, and said that I apprehended she had not considered the discourse of our Lord as a whole, and had perhaps only seen the use that had been

* It will be seen that this argument is a full justification of the note or rubric appended to the end of the Communion Service in the Common Prayer. Christ's human body being literally in heaven, can not be literally on earth. By his Spirit he is every where.

made of the particular place she had quoted, about eating the flesh and drinking the blood.

She said at once that she was intimately acquainted with the whole chapter, but habitually took a totally different view of it from me.

I asked her whether she believed the flesh and blood of His body, which were supposed to be eaten and drank, were the body that was born of the Virgin Mary. I added that I took for granted that she did so believe, because the catechism of the Council of Trent said it was "*the real body of Christ, the same that was born of the Virgin*, and sits at the right hand of the Father in heaven, is contained in the sacrament." chap. iv. ques. 26.

She answered, that of course she believed this, because he had no other but that which was the substance of his mother, born in the world. His divine nature, His Godhead was from heaven; but His human nature, His manhood was from earth; His flesh and blood which belonged to His manhood, to His human body, was of course born of the blessed Virgin. Why, she asked, inquiringly, should you ask such a question?

I could not but enjoy her simplicity, and if we were not established in mutual confidence, I could hardly have had it in my heart to go on with my argument; but I felt she would receive it kindly from me. I said, that her answer, so clear and decisive to my simple question, cut up her interpretation of this discourse in the sixth chapter of St. John by the very roots, for our Lord is speaking throughout it, not of that which He received from the Virgin Mary—not of that which came from earth or belonged to earth, but only of that which came down from heaven. He says, "*My Father giveth you the true bread from heaven*, for the bread of God is He *which cometh down from heaven*," verse 33. This could not be the body of flesh and blood He received from the Virgin Mary. Again He says, "*I came down from heaven*, not to do mine own will, but the will of Him that sent me," verse 38. This was not His human flesh and blood, which came from earth. Again, "*the Jews murmured at Him, because He said, I am the*

bread *which came down from heaven.*" And they said—how is it then He saith, "*I came down from heaven?*" verse 41. Again He said himself, "This is the bread that *cometh down from heaven*, that a man may eat thereof and not die. I am the living bread *which came down from heaven*," verse 50. He is thus speaking throughout this whole discourse, not of the body of manhood, the flesh and blood which He received from the human nature of His mother, and which was from earth ; but of that which came down from heaven, and which therefore could not be His literal flesh and blood ; and that this was His meaning, when He spoke of eating His flesh and drinking His blood, is placed beyond doubt, by His saying in the very next verse, "this is that bread *which came down from heaven*," v. 58. Throughout the whole discourse, He is speaking of his divine love, manifested in His coming down from heaven for our salvation. It was His divine nature, coming down from heaven, and taking our nature for us. It was our faith in this—our feeding on this—our living on this as on flesh and blood, that is the very life of the soul : "I am," said He, "the Bread of Life, he that cometh to me shall never hunger, and he that believeth on me, shall never thirst," verse 35. The promise of never hungering and never thirsting is made to those who believe in Him and come to him. And this is just the promise to those who eat His flesh and drink His blood ; showing that these simply mean feeding on Him, and living on Him by faith. The only difficulty in the whole discourse, arises from not considering the figure which led to it. Our Lord charged the Jews with following Him, that they might again be fed by a miracle of loaves and of fishes as before : "Verily, verily I say unto you, ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves and were filled, labor not for the meat that perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of Man shall give unto you," verse 26. This verse commenced the discourse, it forms the key-note which explains the whole, as showing the scope and reason of His using the figure of eating

and drinking when He meant coming to Him and believing on Him.

She made no remark upon all this; she only smiled and shook her head incredulously; she evidently had no answer for it. Very little more of importance was said, and we parted.

On my return to the house, where I was staying, I found that a young man of some property and influence in the neighborhood was to join us at dinner. He was a Roman Catholic, who was very much disposed to leave the Church of Rome, and with whom I had already had several conversations on the subject.

In the evening, I related to him and my friends the purport of my conversation with my fair opponent; he was a good deal amused as well as interested, and as one thing led to another, I said there were other particulars in this discourse, that bore heavily against the interpretation of the Church of Rome.

The first was derived from the words on which she dwells so much, "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, *and drink His blood*, ye have no life in you: whoso eateth my flesh *and drinketh my blood*, hath eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day." It is plain, that if we are to interpret these words strictly and literally, then *the drinking His blood* is as necessary as *the eating His flesh*; the receiving the cup is as necessary as receiving the host in the sacrament. This touches the practice of the Church of Rome, which gives the consecrated bread to the communicant, but refuses the cup! Now, this language of our Lord implies that the promise of eternal life is only for those who drink the blood as well as eat the bread, and that there can be no eternal life for any who take the bread without also taking the cup. If then this language is to be applied to the sacrament at all, then in the Church of Rome, by withholding the cup, they deprive the people of all the blessings promised to the communicant.

The second consideration is, that if we are to take this

discourse strictly and literally, it will prove the very converse of Transubstantiation; thus—if in the words, “this is my body,” and “this is my blood,” the substantive verb “is,” is to be interpreted as implying a change of the “this” into the “body” and into the “blood,” then we have a parallel place in this discourse, where our Lord says “I *am* the bread” and the substantive verb “am” must imply a similar change; and thus, if the words “this is my body,” imply that the bread is changed into the body of Christ, then the words, “I *am* the bread” must imply that Christ is changed into bread! And thus if one place proves Transubstantiation, the other will prove the converse of it—one proving that bread can be changed into Christ, and the other proving that Christ can be changed into bread!

There is another consideration that has great weight with many minds; it is this; if we apply this discourse of eating the flesh, and drinking the blood to the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper, we must pronounce that it is necessary—absolutely necessary to salvation, so necessary, as that no man can be saved without it, for it is said, “Except ye eat—ye have no life in you.” And again, it involves the equally objectionable position that whoever receives the sacrament, is certainly saved, for it is said, “He that eateth—hath everlasting life, and I will raise him up at the last day.” And thus no one can be saved without it, and no one with it can be lost! These strange results flow from interpreting these words as referring to the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper. Their true intention is to teach us that we are to believe on Him whose love for poor sinners brought Him down from heaven—whose love led Him to become incarnate—whose love led him to die for us; and that the life of our souls is our living and feeding by faith on these blessed truths. This is the true receiving Christ, and feeding on Christ.

I can feel for the members of the Church of Rome who cling to this discourse of our Lord; not that it in anywise gives them the least ground for their favorite dogma: but they are so habituated to look on it as the great support of

the system, that the least doubt of its applicability is like an earthquake shaking the foundations on which they stand ; and yet a mind calm and unprejudiced, that will examine it without passion or party, will be led irresistibly to the conclusion that the subject-matter of our Lord's discourse is very different indeed from the institution of a sacrament.

TRANSUBSTANTIATION.

A young Convert—The Words, "This is my Body, Blood"—Whether Literal or Figurative—Examples to illustrate this—Whether our Lord gave a new and miraculous Power to the Priesthood—Various Meanings imposed on these Words by Romish Writers—Subsequent History of the young Convert.

ABOUT ten or twelve years before I came to reside at —, a Roman Catholic family had emigrated to America. They constituted a large party. They were the relics of an old family, once possessed of considerable influence and extensive property. Indeed their territorial rights were at one time very extensive. But that common bane of Ireland, waste and extravagance, and dissipation and inattention to the commonest maxims of prudence, necessitated the gradual sale of one estate after another, till each generation became poorer than the preceding. At last the representative of the family, being a man of considerable energy and good sense, and having many children, resolved to emigrate to the back woods of the Far West. He took all his family with him except one little girl, some five or six years of age. And she was left with an aunt, who was possessed of some little wreck of former fortune, and who was attached to the little niece, and promised to provide for her.

The aunt was, like her ancestors, a member of the Church of Rome, by inheritance as well as by conviction. And she brought up her little charge, truly, religiously, affectionately, to the best of her judgment. When I commenced my duties in the parish, the niece might have been some fifteen or sixteen years of age. And it was not till a year or two afterward, that I observed her in my school-room on one or two

occasions of my evening lectures. Shortly afterward I learned that she had been induced by one of her young companions to read the Scriptures—that she had been very strongly affected in reading them—that she had asked to be allowed to accompany a young Protestant companion to my lectures—that she had attended several of them—and finally, that she was in every thing but name, a Protestant.

She was a person of very prepossessing appearance, gentle, timid, and retiring, but a universal favorite among her equals in age and station, that is, among the class of inferior shopkeepers in a country town. The recognized and traditionary antiquity of her descent gave her a sort of claim to respect, never denied among the peasantry.

The history of this young and interesting person, like the history of her unfortunate family, is the tale of too many in the sister island. I shall narrate all that is necessary to my present purpose.

I had never spoken to her; but having learned the state of her mind and feelings, I gave my advice to others who had access to her, and ample opportunities of speaking with her. They carefully attended to my advice, and one evening as I visited one of my sick people, with a view to reading the Scriptures and praying with her, I observed her enter and seat herself with others to listen. As this is a very frequent custom among the peasantry, even among the Roman Catholics, there was nothing very remarkable in it, so after some conversation, as was my usual way with the sick, I read a chapter and proceeded to comment on it, as in a cottage lecture.

Our subject led me to speak of the love of the Saviour—a love shown in leaving the heavens—in walking our fallen world—dwelling among fallen men, as partaking himself of our fallen manhood—suffering, bleeding, and dying for us—and now as our High Priest in the heavens, interceding for us. I was led to remark on His leaving in the Holy Scriptures a perpetual record of His love—on His sending His Spirit to make us fit for the enjoyment of His promises—and on His instituting the Lord's Supper as a memorial of his dying love.

I dwelt on this last as designed by Him as a memorial feast or occasion in which His loving and believing people might often meet together, and pray together, and speak together of His wonderful love. There, I said, we can sit and kneel together, and we can eat of the bread in remembrance of His having given His body to be broken unto death upon the cross, as a substitute, as a vicarious offering for us, and we can drink the wine, in memory of His having shed His blood unto death at Calvary to make atonement for us. It was thus a dying legacy, in the enjoyment of which we show to each other our belief that our forgiveness, justification, salvation are derived to us, through the Cross of Calvary. I was endeavoring to press on my hearers that the graces and blessings for the communicants were not through the mere elements or material things themselves, but altogether through the faith developed in the tone, spirit, and prayerfulness of their souls when thus engaged.

While thus expressing myself and drawing to a conclusion without the least allusion to any thing of a controversial nature, I was asked by an elderly man who sat beside me, to explain the words "This is my body," and "This is my blood;" he added, that Roman Catholics understood these words strictly and literally, and thought that all the graces and blessings of the Sacrament were derived to us through the consecrated and transubstantiated elements. And that they did not depend on the belief or unbelief of the communicant. They depended on the material things, external to them, and not on the things that were internal. He said, that he asked the explanation for the sake of others who were present, as well as for himself.

I gladly acceded to his proposal, and said, that I would endeavor to explain the meaning and intention of the words of our Lord. And that I would do so the more readily, as I believed they were often much misunderstood. We believe that our Lord designed the Sacrament to be a commemoration or memorial of His death on the Cross. He said, on giving the bread, "*Do this in remembrance of Me.*" And again, on

giving the wine, He said : "Do this *in remembrance of Me.*" So that we have His own words for believing this Sacrament to be a commemoration or memorial of His death on the Cross. He took bread and breaking it, gave it to the disciples, and said : "Take, eat, this is My body ;" and then giving the wine, He said : "Drink ye all of it, for this is My blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins." We believe that as He designed this to be a remembrance of His great love in dying for us, and in remembrance of the blessings which we have obtained by His death, so when He said : "Take, eat, this is My body." He meant to convey, that we were to partake of that Sacrament, receiving the bread as the memorial of His body that was broken on the Cross ; and when he said : "Drink ye all of this, for this is my blood," He meant to convey that we were to partake of that wine as the memorial of His blood that was shed on the Cross. This we believe to be the true and natural interpretation of His words. It is surrounded with no difficulties, it presents to us nothing marvelous, it involves no contradictions, it is encompassed with no absurdities ; it is simple and natural, conformable to the usages of language, and in accordance with the customs of the Jews.

This mode of interpretation is conformable to the usages of language. There is nothing more frequent than the habit of calling the memorial or representation of a thing by the very name of the thing of which it is a token. If we enter St. Paul's Cathedral, or if we enter Westminster Abbey, we are arrested by the sight of many memorial statues. We look on one, and we say, "This is Nelson ;" and on another, and we say, "This is Marlborough." We do not mean to convey that those marble statues are literally changed or transubstantiated into Nelson or Marlborough, but only that they are the memorials or representations of those celebrated heroes. If we visit the galleries of Windsor Castle, or of Hampton Court, or our National Gallery, as our eyes wander from picture to picture, and we are told that "This is Wellington," or

"This is Prince Albert," or "This is the Queen,"* we are not so reft of all reason as to suppose that our informant intends to convey that these lifeless pictures are really changed or transubstantiated into the Duke, or the Prince, or the Queen; but only that they are the representations of these remarkable persons. If we take a handful of the coin of the realm, and look upon the impressions that are stamped on them, we say of one, "This is George III.;" of a second, "This is George IV.;" of a third, "This is William IV.;" of another, "This is Victoria;" and we are never understood as meaning to convey that these pieces of copper, or silver, or gold, are literally changed or transubstantiated into these royal persons. The youngest child is incapable of so gross a mistake, for from earliest years we are all familiar with that mode of expression. And even the members of the Church of Rome themselves, when they look on images or pictures of Mary, or of Peter, or of Christ, familiarly say of them, "This is the Virgin," or "This is Peter," or "This is Christ," merely meaning to convey that they are the representations or memorials of them: for they, as well as ourselves, are familiar with that method of expression, *which calls the representation or memorial by the name of that of which it is a representation or memorial.*

That this method of expression was as familiar with the sacred writers as with ourselves, can easily be demonstrated. As clear and beautiful an instance as we could possibly desire occurs in the history of Abraham. We read: "This is *my covenant*, which ye shall keep, between me and you and thy seed after thee; every man-child among you shall be circumcised. And ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin; and it shall be *a token of the covenant* betwixt Me and you."—Gen. xvii. 10, 11. It is here said of circumcision in one verse: "This is *my covenant*;" and then in the next verse it is said: "It shall be *a token of the covenant*." So that we have here evidence of the mode in which such expressions are

* These are not the illustrations originally given. They were names of persons familiar in the neighborhood, and these are given in their stead, to make the illustration more generally intelligible.

to be interpreted—the token of the covenant being called the covenant itself. The reiteration of this method of expression is so constant in every part of the sacred volume, that the difficulty is in making a selection. “These bones *are* the whole house of Israel.”—Ezek. xxxvii. 11. “The rough goat *is* the King of Grecia.”—Dan. viii. 21. Although it is evident these bones were not the reality, but the emblem of the house of Israel; and this goat was not substantially, but only in the way of representation, the King of Greece. And in the same way, when our Lord says, “*I am* the Door,” and “*I am* the Vine, and ye *are* the branches;” it is self-evident that He could not possibly have meant that He was literally, truly, substantially changed or transubstantiated into a door or a vine, or that His people are transubstantiated into the branches of a vine. The same remark will apply, when the apostle says, “That Rock *was* Christ,” and “This Hagar *is* Mount Sinai.” The true, the simple, the natural interpretation of these and of all similar expressions is, that, being figurative, according to the analogies of every language in the world, the sign, or emblem, or memorial is called by the name of that of which it is the sign, or emblem, or memorial. And, therefore, we argue, that when our Lord gave the bread to His disciples, intending the Lord’s Supper as a memorial of His death on the Cross, and said, “This is My body,” He meant to convey that it was to be the memorial or emblem of His body broken on the Cross; and that when He gave the cup, and said, “This is My blood,” He designed to convey that it was to be the memorial or emblem of that blood which was shed on the Cross; and that, partaking of these in the face of the Church, every Christian would show his belief in the atonement, satisfaction, propitiation, wrought in the death on Calvary, and that he looked to it and depended on it for redemption, forgiveness, salvation, and glory.

My aged friend, who was a very good old man, expressed himself perfectly satisfied with my explanation, but said that there was a question often asked by his Roman Catholic neighbors, and as some few of them were present, he would

like me for their sakes to notice it. The question was—whether our Lord had not given to the clergy of his Church a power to turn—to change the bread and the wine into the body and blood and soul and divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ. There were several indications among those present, approving of the proposal that I should touch on this question.

I replied, expressing my readiness to answer that or any other inquiry to the best of the light that God had given me. I therefore said that so extraordinary a thing as transubstantiation—so marvelous a miracle as turning a piece of bread into God—so great a miracle, and one so different from any thing and every thing the world has ever heard, and so great that it is, *if true*, the greatest miracle the world has ever seen—ought to be provable by evidence more clear and decisive than a mere expression capable of a figurative interpretation, as all must admit was the case with the words of our Lord. For though the advocates of Rome contend that the words ought to be explained in a literal sense, yet I have found many an opponent candidly admit that they are capable of being explained in a figurative sense. And my argument has then been, that so extraordinary a doctrine as transubstantiation can not be regarded as proved, *when it is made to depend upon a particular interpretation of a phrase, which it is admitted is capable of a totally different interpretation.* Having thus far weakened all dependence on this, I have argued further, that even if we adopted the literal interpretation of our Lord's words—even if we adopted the notion that our Lord did truly, literally transubstantiate the bread into His own "body and blood and soul and divinity and bones and nerves,"—even if we adopted this notion, it yet would not serve the purpose of the Church of Rome; because, it would by no means follow that because Christ being God was able to perform the miracle, every Roman priest also should therefore be able to perform it. He walked on the waters: His having done so, is no proof that the Roman priests can now walk upon the waters. He stilled the winds and the waves: His having done so is no proof that the Romish priests can now still the winds and the

waves. He multiplied the five loaves and fishes, so as to feed thousands: His having done so is no proof that the Romish priests can now multiply food so as to supply the wants of thousands. He healed the sick, the blind, the deaf, the maimed, the leprous, and He raised the dead: His having wrought these miracles, by his divine power, is no proof that the Romish priests can now perform similar miracles. And therefore we argue that, even if we suppose—which we do only for the sake of the argument—that our Lord did work a miraculous transubstantiation of the bread into God, His having wrought such a miracle by His divine power, is no proof that the Romish priests can now work the same miracle.

When I concluded this, one of the Roman Catholics suggested in a very modest and courteous way, that when our Lord said, "Do this in remembrance of me," He commanded them to do the same thing that He did, and of course must be supposed to have given them power to do it. Now if our Lord transubstantiated the bread and wine into his own body and blood and soul and divinity, as the Church believes; then He must have given his apostles power to do the same in remembrance of Him.

I said that this text—these words, had a heavier burden to bear in the Church of Rome than perhaps any other words in the Holy Scriptures; for if we ask what authority they have, for administering this sacrament, they answer—our Lord said "Do this." When we ask authority for the laity receiving the sacrament, they answer—our Lord said "Do this." When we inquire when the apostles were ordained priests, they answer—our Lord said "Do this." When we ask for evidence that the sacrament is a propitiatory or atoning sacrifice, they answer—our Lord said "Do this." When we ask for their authority for saying that the priests of Rome can change the bread and wine into their Saviour and their God, they answer—our Lord said "Do this." And thus these two little words mean sometimes "Administer this," sometimes "Receive this," sometimes "I ordain you priest," sometimes "Offer this sacrifice of the Mass," and sometimes "transub-

stantiate this." Certainly no two little words ever had so much or so many meanings! Now, I added, it seems to me simply to mean that as He and his apostles, his chosen and beloved disciples, were then solemnly sitting and eating together in holy communion, love, and brotherhood—so in after ages, when he was gone from them, they should still meet together, and eat and drink together, in holy love and fellowship and brotherhood, in remembrance of all his love in dying for them—in remembrance of his sufferings and death for their salvation; and thus these words have no distinctly doctrinal or controversial intention; but simply desire all his loving and believing people to hold such holy and brotherly communion together in remembrance of Him:—"Do this *in remembrance of Me.*"

I availed myself of the opportunity afforded me by this to express myself upon the importance of Christians cultivating a tone of mind and a habit of feeling that should be characterized by kindness and benevolence, charity and love; each of us in all our conduct showing that, however we are engaged, we cherish a remembrance of Him who loved us, and gave Himself for us. We then all knelt and prayed together, and soon after we separated.

On my way home, I learned, what indeed I had suspected, that the young person to whom I had already referred, was the one at whose wish the question was proposed to me, as to the meaning of our Lord's words. It was the first time she had ever heard any thing from me in reference to the Church of Rome or any controversial subject. And it led to much communication afterward, till she openly avowed herself a Protestant, and became a regular attendant at my evening lectures in the school-room. She so far complied with the wishes of her aunt, that she did not attend the services of the Church.

Her sufferings for the truth's sake, which she loved with all the fervor of youth and first love, soon commenced. Her aunt threatened and the priest argued. She bore the threats of one she very dearly loved, with a sweetness and meekness,

and at the same time with a depth of affection that was as a knife in her very heart ; but she replied to the arguments of the priest always by some appropriate passage of the Scriptures, and ever with a quiet and gentle spirit. Indeed, it was not her nature to do otherwise with any one, or under any circumstances. The result was a system of slow but ceaseless persecution, originating, no doubt, in the kindest intentions, and with a desire to save her soul by bringing her back to what they fondly believed the only true Church ; but though thus originating, it was not the less bitter and unrelenting. At first she was compelled to long fasts, by her aunt denying her the accustomed food. Then she withheld her clothes so as to prevent her attending the lectures. She even went so far as to take from her her shoes and stockings. And finally, she turned her bodily out of doors, refusing any longer to support her.

It will of course be easier to imagine than to describe the state of suffering affliction which that young creature, about eighteen or nineteen years of age, was thus already called to endure. Separated from her father and mother, from her brothers and sisters, by the broad Atlantic—left wholly destitute as the poorest of the children of poverty—wholly unconscious where she could turn for a roof to shelter her or a meal to satisfy her hunger—she could but sit down and weep, and she did weep in a very agony of tears. And then, after a while, she calmed her heart and turned to Him who desired her to cast all her care upon Him, knowing that he careth for us. She remembered, as she afterward told me, the words of the Psalmist, the first she had ever heard me explain, “I have been young and now am old, yet never saw I the righteous forsaken or his seed begging their bread.” These words, she afterward told me, to use her own beautiful idea, were like the tree in a sunny evening after a day of rain ; the breath of evening shakes the leaves and all becomes a shower of sparkling diamonds. She felt assured that God would raise up some means of deliverance. And as she comforted herself with these thoughts, one of my poor people, a very

poor but very pious woman, saw her, heard her tale, knew her former history, and took her to her own home, and told her she should have a home with her own three daughters as long as she needed it.

All this was immediately communicated to me. Every thing was done to mitigate the feelings of the aunt. She would not give way unless on the simple condition of her returning to the Church of Rome. And thus this poor young creature was flung destitute upon the world.

This girl, now reduced from comparative independence and respectability of station, to the position of one of the poorest peasant-girls of the place, was obliged to go without shoes to her feet, or a bonnet on her head, or any one of the comforts in which she had been reared, and to which she had been accustomed. Those with whom she lived were very poor, and very-kind; but they and she were very much dressed alike; and although I made arrangements unknown to her, by which she should be no additional expense to this Christian family, yet I felt it was not advisable for me to do more than was absolutely necessary for her subsistence, until such time as she could amply prove to the world the sincerity of her profession by suffering for it, and until there could be no room in the mind of any one for impeaching the motives of her conversion. Those who are acquainted with the country will appreciate this.

She now regularly attended the parish church and the evening lectures at the school-room, and seemed, in her deep poverty, more happy in her inner life than she had ever been; but such was the sad and painful and disgraceful state of the country—such was the accursed spirit of malignity and persecution—such was the lukewarmness of the magistracy, and unwillingness to protect on the part of the police, in cases where religion was concerned—that every evening, as my little congregation issued from the school-room, there was a band of men and women ranged in two lines from the doorway, and the moment this poor young creature appeared, they all raised a yelling, a hooting, and jeering against her, calling her

every opprobrious and contemptuous name for leaving the Church of Rome. Nothing could have saved her from personal violence but the steadiness and determination of some of the men of my congregation, who, though they could not protect her from insolence, were well able to protect her from violence. This continued for many, many weeks, till the people got tired of persecuting her, when they saw that they failed to influence her, and when the priest gave up all hope of reclaiming her.

I had now some breathing-time. I could consider what was best to be done for her, and had consulted with some whose judgment was of value. She had proved her sincerity by her steadfast suffering for the love of the truth. She had disproved, in her continued poverty, all insinuations as to her being bribed to abandon her former faith. She had exhibited a steady, gentle, sweet, industrious, humble spirit through all her trials: and it now became the duty of Christian persons to consider what was best to be done for her ultimate provision.

While we thought of these things with some doubts and misgivings and perplexities, there was an unseen hand interposing in a mysterious way.

I was sitting and reading one morning in my apartments, when a man was announced and entered. After a pause, and rather a rough kind of salutation, he sat down and I had time to examine his appearance. He was very much like the skipper of a merchantman—at least like some I had seen in my sea-going years. He was an open, free, frank and rough person, homely as a farmer, and fearless as a sailor. But I could see there was something at his heart: for with all his free manners there was something like a tear starting to his eyes. He was to me a total stranger, but I felt disposed to like him, and asked him his name and business.

My name, he said, is ———, from the state of Ohio.

I instantly recognized the name, and asked whether it was

not he who had emigrated from that parish so many years before, and had left one daughter behind ?

He said he was the very man. He had lost his wife and was now come back to the old country to recover his child and bring her to America, to keep house for him, as his other children were all married and settled there.

Here a God of love and mercy Himself opened out to me the best and fittest provision for the young creature. Her father was come for her !

After a few words, he told me he had arrived only that morning, and went immediately to see his child at her aunt's. He expressed himself shocked and indignant at the conduct of her aunt in turning her out upon the streets, exposed to poverty, destitution, and temptation ;—a young girl who was intrusted to her on the promise to love, cherish, and provide for her ; and for no misconduct, no vice, no crime, but merely because she had changed her religion. He then turned to me, and with deep and unmistakable emotion, with a fearfulness in his manner, as if afraid of my answer, and yet with all the yearning anxiety of a father's heart, he asked me, earnestly, what was his child's character, and what was become of her.

I told him in a few words.

I shall never forget the effect of my words. That strong, rough man was subdued, melted into tears, and sobbed and wept like a little child. It was the joy and blessedness of a parent's heart scattering all the fears and anxieties that had oppressed him. He seemed choking for words to express his thankfulness ; and it was some time before he was able to ask me to bring him to his child.

I felt, however, I had a duty to perform to the child as well as to the father ; and I hoped that in his then state of feeling he might be disposed to make a solemn promise not to interfere with the adopted religion of his daughter. I knew he was a Romanist, and I feared his unduly interfering with her religious convictions. I therefore expressed myself frankly and at once. I told him the circumstances of her conversion, I described her piety and religiousness ; I expressed myself

strongly as to her good conduct and character ; and finally said, that I felt almost unwilling to place her, a Protestant, in the hands of him a Romanist.

He smiled good-humoredly, and said that I need have no fear on that head. In America no man interfered, or was allowed to interfere with the religion of another. It was altogether different from what it was in his recollection in Ireland. This country, he said, in reference to Ireland, is a wretched, miserable, factious country, and the people are bigoted and priest-ridden, so that they can not help themselves; or get out of their wretchedness ; as long as he had lived in it himself, he had not only found it so, but was himself a helpless, though unwilling victim to the system. It was as much as a man's life was worth to leave the Church of Rome ; for the faction of the priest was sure to do his bidding. But in America all was changed ; he felt as if breathing the free air made him feel free himself, and entertain free feelings and free opinions. He cast aside all the party notions and factious ways he had recollected in this country ; and it was impossible in America for the priests to have the influence or the power to persecute and ill-treat those who leave them. Indeed so many, who were inveterate Roman Catholics, turn and leave them—so many read the Scriptures—so many go to the Protestant worship and prayer and preaching, that it would be impossible to interfere with them.

I asked him then, how, if his child went out with him, how she would be provided in the way of public worship.

He then stated what was very new to me, and certainly was extremely interesting. He said he could only speak of the country where he had himself settled, and which was very extensively settled all around him ; but he believed from what he heard of other districts, that it was by no means singular. There was no regular or established Church of any kind, but clergymen of different Churches used to visit the district periodically. One week we have the visit of a Church of England clergyman at the house of one settler, and then all the settlers assemble there, and we have the Church of Eng-

land service; the next week some Presbyterian minister comes to the house of another settler, and then all the settlers in the neighborhood come together there, and we have the Presbyterian prayers and preaching. On another week the Wesleyan minister arrives at the house of some one else, and we all assemble there, and we have Methodist praying and preaching. Then there is the Baptist minister; and thus we have a great number of clergymen, and we assemble very often at other houses and sometimes at other settlements. In this description he mentioned the names of the settlers and clergymen.

So I asked him how he managed at his own house:—Had he a Roman Catholic priest?

He smiled, and said there were very few of them in the country, and that for himself and his family they never wished or cared to see one. He said he and his family acted like all the other settlers, they went wherever they had the preaching, and he felt that every one of the clergymen, who thus visited them, was a good, earnest man, and he liked them better than any priests he had ever known, "and" turning earnestly to me, he said, "my little girl shall always go with us to the meeting, if you have no objection, for all my children always do so."

I could not but feel very thankful at hearing all this, I gave him my assent with all my heart, and I would not detain him a moment longer from his child.

A few moments brought him to the house where she lived. It was a happy meeting for both parties; I of course withdrew, but saw them the next day. The more I saw of the man, the more I liked him. There was an amount of honest purpose and right feeling, combined with common sense and energy of character that was very unusual; and he presented in his own person, a fine illustration of what the character of the Irish might become, when once emancipated from the iron priestly domination which oppresses them. Within a very few days, he had his daughter well-dressed; and they

caused no small sensation in the place. In faith and hope and charity, as well as in prayer, we soon parted.

The singular statement which he gave, as to the state of religious instruction in the remote settlement where he was located, seems to account very much for the religious change so remarkable among so many of the Roman Catholics who have emigrated to America.

TRANSUBSTANTIATION.—II.

An Anecdote narrated by a Romanist respecting himself—The Argument of a Priest answered—Explanation of our Lord's use of His peculiar Language—The Feast of the Passover explains His Words—The Argument against Transubstantiation from Reason—Defect of this—The Argument from the Bodily Senses, illustrated by an Anecdote—Transubstantiation and the Trinity contrasted—The Evidence of the Senses, appealed to as Infallible—Always appealed to by God himself in all His Revelation.

THE following conversation took place under unusual circumstances.

I had accepted an invitation to dinner. It was near the county town, and during the assizes. The larger portion of the grand jurors were present. After the usual amount of local politics had been discussed, we adjourned to the drawing-room. Many ladies were present.

A Roman Catholic gentleman—a member of Parliament—drew me aside and after a few moments' conversation, narrated the following anecdote respecting himself.

He had been in Dublin a few days before, and had been induced by a party with whom he was staying, to go one evening to the chapel in the ——— to hear a controversial oration or lecture from a very celebrated Roman Catholic priest. There was a vast assembly, a large amount of excitement, and a very splendid display of oratory. He said it was more flashy, brilliant, piquant, than he liked for the pulpit, but it was very popular and very effective, it was not sufficiently calm, collective and argumentative for him, but that perhaps was the fault of his taste. It was on the whole a very able address. He said the subject was Transubstantiation, and that the orator, when handling the words, "This is my body" and "This is my blood," had paused, so as to cause an intense and

profound silence through the vast congregation, all watching, and as it were holding their breath, for him to proceed. At this moment he burst out into a passionate and most impressive tone, asking—"When the blessed Lord said, 'This is my body,' how dare the Protestants to say, it is not His body? When the blessed Lord said again, 'This is my blood,' how dare the Protestants to say it is not His blood? They are always talking about the Scriptures, and they are always telling us that the Scriptures, the whole Scriptures and nothing but the Scriptures, will satisfy them, and yet here the Scriptures say, 'This is my body,' and 'This is my blood,' how dare these Protestants say it is neither the one nor the other, but must be explained in some spiritual or figurative or mystical sense?" The Roman Catholic gentleman, who narrated this, said, it had an electrifying effect on the audience—that for himself while he admired the oratory and the acting, he could not but think very lightly of the argument—that the next day he had dined at the house of a well-known Roman Catholic leader—that the priest of the preceding evening was one of the company, and that there was some conversation about the discourse, and especially about the passage already described. This Roman Catholic gentleman stated that he himself turned to the priest and said—"When our Lord has said 'I am the true vine,' how dare the Romanists to say He is not a vine? When our Lord has said, 'I am a door,' how dare the Romanists to say He is not a door? When our Lord has said, 'I am the Good Shepherd,' how dare the Romanists say He is not a shepherd? And when the language of Scripture is so clear and plain, saying He is a door, and a vine, and a shepherd, how dare the Romanists to deny or contradict these words, and say they are to be explained in a spiritual or figurative sense?" He stated, that having said this to the priest before all the company, very much to their surprise, he asked him how he would answer such an argument from a Protestant, if urged in reply to his argument? He added that the priest became thoroughly confused, and stammered a number of things that had nothing to do with the question, though

very much to the amusement of many of the company, and especially of their host, whose keen, quick, twinkling eye seemed thoroughly to enjoy this confusion of the priest. When he had concluded his anecdote, he asked me what I thought of his answer?

I told him very frankly that I thought he gave as good a reply as such an argument would admit of—that the argument itself was a mere popular clap-trap, and was best answered in the same way—that Solomon had desired us to answer a fool according to his folly, and that in my judgment he had given precisely the kind of answer such an argument deserved.

He then said, after a few more observations, that he thought that if priests and parsons would explain the language of the Scriptures, and tell their meaning and illustrate the reason for what they say, they would serve the cause infinitely more than by mere controversial arguments, which always appear to be too partisan—too much on one side—to influence cool and well-balanced judgments.

I said that such was the usual course of the Protestant clergy in their ordinary ministrations. At their ordination, the Bible was placed by the bishop in their hands with the solemn charge to preach the Gospel. This was their duty—to preach the Scriptures.

He replied that I had mistaken his meaning—that what he had intended to convey was that an explanation of the phrases in Scripture—a fair, sensible exposition of them, was what would prove more useful than any thing else. He would explain himself by an illustration. Our Lord said, "This is my body," and "This is my blood." Roman Catholics explain these words literally. Protestants explain them figuratively. Now, what is wanted is some reason—some explanation why our Lord used those words instead of any other, and showing why, if he meant any thing beyond the very words themselves, he did not say more precisely what he meant. If he meant them figuratively especially, why did he not so express himself?

I replied at once, that his inquiry was perfectly just and legitimate;—that the words our Lord used were precisely the words we should have expected him to use, and the words, that of all others, were the most easy and the most likely to be understood in the circumstances under which they were spoken. The meaning of phrases and allusions always depends more or less on the circumstances under which they were spoken. And in this case we should especially consider the circumstances. This consideration has always satisfied my own judgment, and I felt sure it would satisfy his, if he allowed me to explain it.

He most courteously begged me to proceed, for that it was a point in which he felt a great interest.

I then said—It was when our Lord was eating the Passover with His disciples that He instituted the sacrament. It will be recollected that the Passover was instituted to be a commemoration of the deliverance of the Israelites from the bondage of Egypt, through their being sprinkled with the blood of the Paschal lamb. It was when partaking of this festival for the last time with His disciples, that our Lord instituted the sacrament, to be a commemoration of the deliverance of His people from the bondage of sin, through their being sprinkled with His blood as “the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world. It is admitted—fully admitted by the members of the Church of Rome—that our Lord designed to rescind the Jewish Passover and to substitute the Christian sacrament in its stead. But the precise point which should be retained in mind—the point which explains our Lord’s words in the instituting this sacrament—is, that He instituted it *while eating the Passover*. It was the bread of the Passover He took and blessed and distributed. It was the wine of the Passover He took and blessed and distributed. Every form that had been gone through was some form of the Passover; and every word that had been spoken was some word connected with the Passover. Under these circumstances, it will be felt by reasonable men that as it was not unlikely our Lord’s words and actions, in instituting this new festival, would have some refer-

ence to those of the old festival, so it is to the Passover we are to look for an explanation of the sacrament. We feel as sure as of any verity on earth, that it is the true explanation of this matter. When Moses, at the command of God, instituted the feast of the Passover, he desired the Israelites, as we read in Exodus xii. 1-14, to kill a lamb—to sprinkle its blood on their houses, and to eat the flesh of the lamb. His words are, "Ye shall eat it in haste. **IT IS THE LORD'S PASSOVER.**" Now there is nothing more evident than that the lamb they were eating, was *not* the Lord's Passover. The Lord's Passover was His passing through the land of Egypt, and *passing over* the houses of the Israelites who had sprinkled their doors with the blood of the lamb. The words are, "Ye shall eat it in haste. **IT IS THE LORD'S PASSOVER.** For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the first-born in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment; I am the Lord. And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are; and when I see the blood, I will *pass over* you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt."—Exodus xii. 12, 13. We thus learn that the Lord's passing-over the Israelites was *one thing*, and the lamb that was eaten by the Israelites was *another thing*; that one was a *fact*, and the other a *memorial of that fact*. And therefore, when Moses says of the lamb, "It is the Lord's Passover," he must mean that the lamb was the token or memorial of the Lord's Passover. He could not possibly have meant that the lamb which had been roasted and which they were eating, was literally, truly, substantially changed or transubstantiated into the Lord's passing over the houses of the Israelites. He must have meant, and the advocates of the Church of Rome freely acknowledge that he must have meant, that the lamb was not literally, truly, substantially the Passover of the Lord, but only the token or memorial of it. Though Moses simply says:—"It is the Lord's Passover," yet his words are to be interpreted as meaning—"It is the *memorial* of the Lord's Passover." We have thus, on their own admis-

sion, an example of that mode of speaking which calls the memorial by the name of that of which it is the memorial.

He saw the point of this explanation in a moment. He said it seemed natural and reasonable. And he supposed that our Lord, in using similar expressions, did no more than what was easily intelligible to the apostles; that is, He gave the name of the thing itself to that which was only its memorial.

I said—he had anticipated my explanation, which was founded on the method in which the Israelites celebrated this festival every year. This festival was yearly celebrated in every family. The lamb having been roasted, the members of the household were assembled; and the head of the family or the master of the household, standing at the head of the table, pronounced the words—"This is the Lord's Passover." He then gave it to those that were present, and they ate it according to the injunctions of Moses. Now there is nothing more evident than that the lambs that were thus eaten in after-years in the land of Israel, were not truly, literally, substantially changed or transubstantiated into the Lord's passing over the houses of the Israelites, or even into the original lamb of the Passover that had been eaten in Egypt. There is nothing more evident than that these lambs were designed as tokens or memorials of that true Passover, which had taken place ages before. The advocates of the Church of Rome are constrained to acknowledge this. They are constrained to acknowledge that in all the families of Israel for so many hundreds of years it was usual to say, "This is the Lord's Passover," when it was meant to convey—"This is the memorial of the Lord's Passover:" they are constrained to confess, that as every head of a family was in the yearly habit of solemnly uttering these words, and that as every member of all the nation of the Israelites was in the yearly habit of hearing these words solemnly uttered, so there must have been an universal knowledge of this mode of expression, by which the memorial is called by the name of that of which it is the memorial.

Now the next step in our explanation which gives the full

and clear account of our Lord's words, is, that our Lord had assembled with His disciples to eat the Passover; to celebrate with His disciples for the last time this Passover which I have been describing. He, there, as the Master or Head of those disciples, must have pronounced the words, "This is the Lord's Passover." He must have pronounced those words over the Paschal lamb. Not that it really was the Lord's passing over the houses of the Israelites; not that it was the original lamb that was slain and eaten in Egypt, but that it was the *token* or *memorial* of it. And thus our Lord, on that occasion, had in the ears of all his disciples used this mode of expression, by which the memorial of the thing is called by the name of the thing of which it is the memorial. And then, when immediately afterward He rescinded that feast of the Passover, and substituted the feast of the Lord's Supper in its stead, it was no more than natural that he should use the same mode of expression in the new sacrament which was used in the old sacrament; it was no more than natural that he should utter the same form of phrase respecting the Christian sacrament, which only a few moments before He had used respecting the Jewish sacrament; it was no more than natural that as He had the moment before said of the lamb, "This is the Passover," when He meant, "This is the memorial of the Passover," so He should now say of the bread, "This is My body broken," when He meant, "This is the memorial of My body broken."

He entered very frankly into this, saying it was perfectly satisfactory to his mind. He guarded himself against being misunderstood as assenting to my opinion against transubstantiation. He was a Roman Catholic, and believed with his Church; but, he said that did not prevent his seeing that I had fairly explained the reason of our Lord using that particular form of expression. It was one the apostles were accustomed to—it was one they had just heard Him apply to the Jewish sacrament, so that they felt no surprise, and could make no mistake nor misunderstand Him, when they heard Him now apply the same form of expression to the Christian

sacrament. He seemed fully to understand and appreciate this explanation, and thanked me warmly for it.

He said, however, he had felt another difficulty when he had listened to conversations on the subject. It was not that he had any very precise or clear views on such points. He left such questions of theology to professional men—to the clergy—that he was himself born and educated a Roman Catholic, and intended to live and die one, as his family had always done before him—that he hoped a man might be a good Catholic and a good Christian without troubling himself about theological controversy; but, still, sometimes, he liked to understand a subject when made a topic of conversation. Now the precise difficulty on which he ventured to ask my opinion was this—He had once been arguing with the confessor of his family—in fact, his own confessor—on this subject of transubstantiation. He had argued, of course, for argument's sake, that a man ought not to be required to believe a dogma so contrary to his reason—so contrary to his common sense, as that the little wafer or bread is really, truly, substantially changed into God Himself;—that this little thing, which the priest's servant makes, and which the priest blesses, and which he holds in his two fingers, and which he places in my mouth, and which I eat and swallow, is the great God and Creator Himself! He added that his confessor replied that it was the essence of faith—religious faith—to believe what is revealed; and as reason leads often astray, and common sense often misleads—as they both were liable to great perversion; so it was the province of religious faith to believe the revelation of God against all the reason and sense of fallen man. It was becoming a Christian to be humble, and to have an humble opinion of his own judgment; and he should therefore bow to the revelation of God. He said the priest cited the doctrine of the Trinity, as in the same way contrary to reason and common sense, as it was called; but that it was a great inconsistency in the Protestants that they received the Trinity while they rejected transubstantiation. They were both alike contrary to human sense and reason. He concluded by asking

me whether I could resolve this difficulty, as he should like, he said, laughingly, to puzzle his confessor.

I said that his confessor had given a very fair answer to his argument; and that the real difficulty was, that his argument was defective;—that he had not stated the objection against transubstantiation correctly, and therefore left himself open to this answer. The defect of his mode of stating his argument was, that he had said that transubstantiation was contrary to common sense and reason.

And is not that your opinion as a Protestant? he asked me, earnestly. And how else could the argument be stated? He had always thought that that was the objection.

My reply to this was, that his statement might be very true and correct, but was liable to the answer his confessor had given to it. The true objection is, that this dogma is contrary to *the senses*—not that it is contrary to reason or sense, as we understand the phrase, common sense, but contrary to the senses—the *bodily senses*, the sense of sight, touch, smell, taste. This is the real objection, and this has no answer. I proposed to illustrate this.

I then narrated the well-known anecdote, sometimes ascribed to the celebrated Buckingham. He was confined to his couch; and as the priests were very anxious to make a convert of him, he proposed to amuse himself at their expense. He therefore yielded to the entreaties of those around him, and consented to receive a confessor. This man proceeded to address the witty noble on the subject of repentance and death and the sacraments. But he disregarded all that was said, in the most studied manner; affecting a sort of wandering or imbecility of mind. He held a cork in his hand, spoke of it as his favorite horse, patted its sides, and stroked its mane, till the confessor, pitying the state of his mind, spoke to him on the subject. He assured him it was not his horse, but only a cork. The other insisted it was indeed his horse, and begged him to observe its noble neck, its beautiful head, its flowing mane, its finely-formed limbs, its splendid action! Still the good chaplain persevered and argued with him, to the effect that if he

would only look at it, he might see it was not like a horse, but only a cork—that if he would only feel it, he might perceive it was not a horse, but only a cork—that if he would smell it, he might smell that it was not a horse, but only a cork—that if he would taste it, he might at once perceive it did not taste like a horse, but only a cork. The other seemed struck by this process of argument, and gave way, confessing he might have been deceived by some one who had told him it was his horse, and whom he had hastily believed without due consideration. He now was convinced it was only a cork. The confessor having succeeded thus far continued his religious exhortations, and in the end, proposed administering to him the Holy Sacrament, to which he at once assented. Every thing was soon arranged; and the confessor gave him the consecrated host. He asked him what it was? The confessor answered it was the Lord Jesus Christ—it was the body of God. This, exclaimed the merry wit, in affected astonishment, this Jesus Christ—this the body of God! It is only a little wafer of flour and water! The good chaplain was shocked, and assured him that it was the body and blood of the Lord. The other then proceeded to argue with him, and said, that he must be under some mental hallucination, for if he would look at it he might see it was not like Jesus Christ, but only a wafer—that if he would feel it, he might perceive by the touch that it was not like Jesus Christ, but only a wafer—that if he would taste it, he would perceive that it was not like Jesus Christ, but was only a little wafer—that if he would smell it, he would at once find that it was not like Jesus Christ, but was only a little piece of flour and water. And he assured the confessor that there could be no doubt that a man must be out of his senses who believed a thing so contrary to his senses. The confessor could only withdraw in despair.

My Roman Catholic acquaintance was exceedingly amused at this anecdote. He thoroughly enjoyed it; and I suspected, from what he said, that he meant to try its effects on his family confessor on the next occasion of a controversy with him. He mentioned a few droll incidents which had occurred

in the history of his family, connected with religious questions, and it was some time before I was able to bring him back to the object I had in view.

I reminded him that in the anecdote of the witty Buckingham and the simple confessor, the former never alluded to reason or common sense—had never argued that transubstantiation was impossible or contrary to reason or common sense. If he had done so he could have been answered by some platitudes and common-places about faith and humility and submission of judgment, and about the pride of reason and the humility of faith; and all that kind of thing, which, though easily answered, takes a longer time to answer than it deserves. He was a man too keen for such a mistake; he, therefore, assailed the doctrine as contrary to *the senses*, that is, to *the bodily senses*, to the sense of sight, the sense of touch, the sense of taste, the sense of smell. The remaining sense, that of hearing, does not bear upon it. This is the true objection—we taste the consecrated elements, and we find they are precisely the same they were before consecration; they taste not like Jesus Christ, but simply as bread and wine. We see them and observe they are exactly the same they were before; we see they are not like Jesus Christ, but merely bread and wine as before. And it is the same with the sense of touch and the sense of smell. The objection thus is, that this dogma is contrary to the bodily senses. And when stated in this way, it has the invaluable advantage that it can not be answered, as he himself had been answered by his family confessor, namely, by alluding to the doctrine of the Trinity, and arguing that it too is a mystery contrary to reason and common sense, as much as transubstantiation. My objection, I said, was not liable to this, for it refers only to *the bodily senses*; and I can therefore say that however the Trinity may be above and beyond these, it certainly is not contrary to them. To which of our bodily senses is the Trinity contrary? sight—smell—hearing—taste—feeling? It is altogether above and beyond their reach or range, and can not be tested by them, it can not be tried by them. Whereas—and here is the

grand difference between it and transubstantiation—the latter is properly, and altogether within reach of all our senses, and therefore may be tried and tested by them, and when so tried and tested, it is found contrary to the bodily senses. There is no parallel between them; the Trinity is beyond their reach, and can not be tested by them. Transubstantiation is properly within their sphere, and is rejected by them.

He was thoroughly pleased with this argument, at least he so expressed himself; and he was one who seemed to enter on such subjects with an intellectual pleasure rather than a religious feeling. It seemed to me that it touched, as it were, a nerve in his intellectual system. He asked me several questions, so as to make himself perfectly master of the argument; and he said he thought it impossible to answer; and that he could conceive no reply except one that would impeach the certainty of the senses.

I stated, that this very objection had been made; but that the reply was obvious, and all was the more cogent, because it was practical. Although perhaps some one of the senses may be mistaken under particular circumstances, when the other senses are brought to assist it, they can not be mistaken. If we suppose an object at a distance so great as that our sight may be mistaken, and then bring it so near as that we can feel it, and examine it by our sight, and also by our other senses—if we suppose an apple at such a distance that we can not see clearly whether it be an apple or an orange, yet, when bringing it near, we examine it by our sight, and see it is an apple and not an orange; and then feel it, and then smell it, and then taste it, and then find that each sense proves it an apple, and not an orange, we then have the strongest evidence that can be submitted to the human mind. And when, in like manner, the consecrated bread or wine is before us, and we look on it, and see that it does not look like Jesus Christ, but only like bread and wine; when next we handle it, and find that it does not feel like Jesus Christ; when next we taste it, and find that it does not taste like Jesus Christ; when again we smell it, and find that it does not smell like Jesus

Christ, but only like bread and wine: when thus we have brought it to the test of four senses, and find it still the same thing, we feel that we have the strongest evidence that God can give or man receive, that there is no truth in Transubstantiation, for that the bread and wine do, after consecration, retain the very same substance of bread and wine as before consecration.

My Roman Catholic companion seemed frank and candid. He was disposed to admit the force of an argument opposed to his own opinions, although he found himself unable to yield to it. I felt that I ought not to press the subject more, as he suggested no further difficulty.

There are, however, some members of the Church of Rome who feel a difficulty in submitting to the evidence of the bodily senses. When I have met such persons, I have endeavored to press on them some of the three following considerations:—

In the first place, our Lord appeals to them as the last and most decisive court of appeal upon the greatest of all truths. After His resurrection, He appealed to His disciples, and “He said unto them, Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? Behold My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself: handle Me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see Me have. And when He had thus spoken, He showed them His hands and His feet.”—Luke xxiv. 38–40. Here was a direct appeal to their senses of seeing and feeling. Again; we read, that when Thomas came and would not believe the accounts he heard, “Jesus came and said unto Thomas, reach hither thy finger, and behold My hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into My side: and be not faithless, but believing.”—John xx. 27. This was a direct appeal to the senses, as if they were the most certain evidence of the truth. We say, the most certain evidence; and we are justified in this, because the evidence is expressly stated in Holy Scripture to be *infallible*. We refer to the words which open the Acts of the Apostles: “The former treatise have I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus

began both to do and to teach, until the day in which He was taken up, after that He through the Holy Ghost had given commandment unto the apostles whom He had chosen : to whom also He showed Himself alive after His passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God."—Acts i. 1–3. It is here stated, that our Lord gave *infallible* proof of His resurrection ; and that infallible proof was the fact that the sense of *hearing* and the sense of *seeing*, which the disciples enjoyed, and which, examined His risen body, attested His resurrection. This is the only place in the Holy Scripture, in which *infallibility* is mentioned ; and it is not a little remarkable that it is applied to the evidence of the bodily senses ; so that we have the "infallible" evidence of our senses against the doctrine of Transubstantiation.

In the second place, it is to be remembered that not only in the matter of the resurrection, but also in every thing else, it has pleased God to make His appeal to our senses. If He has proved the mission of His prophets and apostles by miracles, it must be felt that He has appealed to our senses. For what is a miracle but an appeal to our senses ? It is an appeal to the sense of sight, by which we see a manifest setting aside the course of nature. What is the message of the Gospel, whether written or preached, but an appeal to our sight, by which we read it ; or an appeal to our hearing, by which we hear it ? What were the words of Jesus, but an appeal to our hearing ? and what were the miracles of Jesus, but an appeal to our seeing ? If God displayed His hatred of sin by destroying the whole world by a deluge of waters, or by proclaiming His law amid the thunders and lightnings of Sinai : or if God displayed His love of His people, by sending the prophets to preach to us, or by founding His Church in the midst of us, or by giving His Son to die for us, He has invariably made that display, whether of hatred or love, by an appeal to our senses. And as every prophecy that was delivered, and every command that was given, and every doctrine that was taught, and every miracle that was wrought, was an

appeal to the senses of seeing, or of hearing, or of feeling ; so we have the authority of Heaven's example for making our bodily senses the great and final court of appeal.

In the third place, it is a point admitted by all writers on the nature of human knowledge—it is a point clearly established by Locke in his *Essay on the Human Understanding*, that all the knowledge we possess must be through the medium of the bodily senses. If we have knowledge of past history, that knowledge has reached us through books which we have read ; or in other words, through our sense of sight by which we have read those books. If we have knowledge of the transactions of other lands, not by books nor by sight, but by the narration of others, that knowledge reaches us through the sense of hearing, by which we hear those narrations. There are other departments of knowledge, which we obtain through the channel of the other senses. All our pleasures and our pains—all our joys and our sorrows—are connected with those things that have reached us through one or the other of the senses. And this is so universal, that we know nothing, and can know nothing, unless we hear it, or see it, or feel it, or taste it, or smell it. So universal is this that the advocates of the Church of Rome always make their own appeal to our senses ; for however they are disposed to throw a doubt on their evidence on this question of Transubstantiation, yet they adduce no proof in its support, except an appeal to the senses. They point to certain words in the Scriptures. And what is this, but an appeal to our sense of sight ? And if our sense of sight, when examining the bread, may be, as they assert, so mistaken that we only see it as bread when really it is Christ, then our sense of sight, when examining the words of Scripture, may in like manner be so mistaken, as that we only see one thing, when the words are really something else. If our sense of sight is competent to determine without doubt that these words are in the Scriptures, then our sense of sight is equally competent to determine without doubt whether the consecrated bread be really bread or really Christ.

I have ever found these three considerations sufficient to satisfy calm and earnest and honest inquirers, that our bodily senses are not to be set aside, or put in abeyance upon this question. But all the advocates of Romanism are not of this class; and indeed they have felt the force of the argument, as derived from the bodily senses so much that they have invented a new system of philosophy in order to counteract it. They teach that the appearance and the taste and the smell and the feeling of the consecrated bread, are only accidents and not realities; that all these may be there, and yet the substance not there; that all these properties and peculiarities of bread may be there, and yet something else, instead of the bread, be there all the while; that the size and the color and the shape and every other property characteristic of various substances, does not really belong to them—that these things are only a species of phantoms, a species of hollow nothingness in themselves, and yet contain something altogether different from what they seem to contain. The advocates of the Church of Rome have therefore been compelled to invent a system of philosophy peculiar to themselves, and according to this philosophy an object is round and yet not round, and it is square and yet not square, and it is long and yet not long, and it is white and yet not white; but white may be black, and black may be white, for we are not to judge that it is white because it looks white, or that it is black because it looks black, for that this color is only an accident or appearance, and there is really something else of a different color under this accident or appearance. We are not to call the snow white; nor the grass green, nor the sky blue, for that these are only accidents or appearances, distinct from the realities, and so distinct that it may be the snow is really black, though it looks white, and the grass crimson, though it looks green, and the sky scarlet, though it looks blue. It would be obviously impossible, within the limits of this paper, to expose this system of philosophy as fully as I might; but at least I may ask, if all these accidents of the consecrated bread are really nothing else than phantoms and shadowy and

unreal nothings, how comes it to pass that the consecrated bread, when kept for awhile, begins to mold and to fill with worms and to be eaten by worms, and to vanish away by the process of decay, just like all real substances? It is evident, that unreal phantoms and shadowy nothings could not produce worms and feed worms. And then, when all is decaying away, what, I ask, becomes of Jesus Christ, who was supposed to be the real substance under those accidents? Has He become moldy? Has He become corrupt; contrary to the word, "Thou wilt not suffer Thy Holy One to see corruption?" Has He produced worms? Have the worms been eating our Saviour and our God? And when all appearances or accidents are vanished away, what becomes of Him, who is supposed to be the real substance under them? Has He too vanished away? They tell us that as soon as the consecrated bread begins to decay—as soon as the worms appear, then Jesus Christ departs, and the annihilated bread comes back again, or the whole thing is transubstantiated back again into bread! There is thus a double transubstantiation! One is accomplished with the words of consecration, but the other is accomplished without these or any words of consecration. In one, the bread is transubstantiated into Jesus Christ, *at the words of the priests*; in the other, Jesus Christ is transubstantiated back again into bread, *at the sight of the worms!*

TRANSUBSTANTIATION.—III.

A Scene at the Killeries—An Irish Reader and a Scapularian—The use of Riddle in Controversy dangerous—The Sin of exposing Religion and religious things to Scoffing—An Anecdote respecting Maynooth—This Sin charged against the Church of Rome—In the Rubrics, *De Defectibus*, in the Roman Missal—Again in her Views of the Institution of the Lord's Supper.

Those who are acquainted with the West of Ireland—with the district in which so many conversions from the Church of Rome have lately taken place—will remember the Killeries. An arm of the sea, extremely narrow but of great extent, winds its way among the mountains forming what the Norwegians call a *fjord*. It is a scene of great wildness, but of beauty and grandeur also.

This district, about twenty-five years ago, was scarcely known. There had been no roads that could be traversed except on wild ponies, until the government made those noble roads that have now opened the district. And for a very long period after their completion, there were few indeed who had love enough for the wild and sublime in nature, to visit scenes where it was thought impossible to obtain any accommodation. I had an intense love for such scenery. The savage wildness of the place—the perfect solitude that characterized it—the fine reach of the sea, sweeping in from the broad Atlantic—the height and grandeur of the mountains—and the deep and intense silence that sometimes pervaded mountain, valley, and water, gave to the scene an inexpressible charm. At least it was so to my feeling, and frequently I used to visit it. I often rode over a distance of about fourteen miles to Maam, where the government engineer had built a small

house, which on his departure was converted into a little inn. There I secured a bed and stabled my horse, and then proceeded on foot some eight or nine miles further to the Killeries.

One day while here, I observed a fishing-boat with some half-a-dozen men laying a net for the salmon. They used to ascend this fiord in great numbers. I was looking at them for some time from a high rock far above the shore, and I noticed two other men seated at some distance, apparently in very earnest conversation. They had books in their hands. I had not much time to indulge in curiosity as to their books or their conversation, though I had my suspicions as to the nature of both, when I saw the fishermen preparing to draw their nets. They did this usually at a certain state of the tide, when they saw the salmon rise. It seemed to me as if the nets checked the advance of the fish, which immediately rose to the surface to advance up the bay; upon this the fishermen drew the nets, and as I descended to witness this, I reckoned nearly forty salmon, netted at a single haul! I spoke to the fishermen, and to the cadgers with little ragged ponies and donkeys, with panniers, who purchased the fish at about one penny the pound, and immediately proceeded further inland to obtain a market for it. They had from fifteen to twenty miles to travel, before they could have the slightest prospect of selling a single fish.

When leaving this busy little scene of fishing, I observed the two men whom I had before noticed in conversation. They knew who I was, and addressed me with the usual courtesy of the people. I found that one of them was an Irish reader, that is, one who taught the Irish language, and who was in the habit of reading the Holy Scriptures in Irish in the cottages upon the mountain. The other was a confraternity man, a very zealous and active Roman Catholic, whose knowledge of Latin had given him a great reputation among the peasantry. They had been engaged in an animated though friendly controversy.

The Roman Catholic appealed to me whether it was right

to, have recourse to ridicule on so serious a subject—that there was nothing held in the Church of Rome in so great and profound belief and reverence as the doctrine of the Holy Sacrament. They believed that it was very Jesus Christ—that it was God himself—that after the holy words of the priest the conversion or change took place, so that it was no longer the wafer or bread, but the God-man Jesus Christ himself—that this was their belief, and that therefore they looked on it with every possible reverence. Now he complained that his companion had been arguing against this doctrine, in a way that turned it into ridicule, so as greatly to distress and pain his feelings, for that the subject was too grave and solemn for ridicule, and he felt it touched his religion too closely for him to like it. He did not, and would not, show anger toward his companion, whom he very much respected and liked because he was a good man and could talk well, but he did not like his religion to be ridiculed, and appealed to me whether it was right.

It was apparent from the radiant countenance of one and the annoyed expression in the face of the other, that some hard hitting had passed between them, more to the satisfaction of the Protestant than of his Romanist friend.

I said, however, that ridicule was a very effective, but very often a dangerous weapon. It sometimes, like the knife of the operator, by cutting too deeply, not only cut away a cancer, but even life itself. And thus often in throwing ridicule on a given dogma, there is danger of the sense of the ridiculous going too deep—adhering to the subject itself independent of the dogma, and thus it sometimes tends to a spirit of skepticism and infidelity. Such a weapon, therefore, should be used only with extreme caution; but it was clear that it might sometimes be used, and I showed that by reference to 1 Kings xviii. 27, where the prophet of God pours ridicule upon the gods of the heathen, "Elijah mocked them and said, Cry aloud: for he is a god; either he is talking, or he is pursuing, or he is in a journey, or peradventure he is asleep, and must be awaked!" Here was ridicule. The thing, therefore,

is admissible, though certainly it should be very seldom, very sparingly, and very cautiously used, both for the sake of the subject itself, which is sacred, and for the sake of others, whose feelings may be wounded by it. I added that in this case, the fault was not in the prophet who ridiculed these absurd notions about the gods of the heathen, but in the heathen themselves, who invented notions so essentially ridiculous. If we would avoid ridicule, our truest course is not to make ourselves ridiculous.

The Scripture-reader said very kindly that he had never ridiculed the religion of his friend—that he was detailing an anecdote and narrating what others had done, and that his friend had supposed he was ridiculing the Church of Rome. It was altogether a mistake so far as he was concerned. He then mentioned that he was narrating what he had heard some years before, and which was called to mind by seeing a missal in the hand of his companion. Some gentlemen, of whom one had been a Roman Catholic, educated at Maynooth, but who afterward became a Protestant, were visiting the college. They took with them a very small, short tract, printed on a single fly-leaf. This tract contained certain extracts from the missal and a few questions on each extract. These extracts were directions about the consecrated host in case a mouse should have eaten it, or the winds carried it away, or a dog run away with it, or a communicant vomited it; and the questions were as to whether they really believed with the Church of Rome, that if the consecrated host was God himself, He could not save himself from a mouse, or the wind, or a dog, or the sickness of a communicant? He added, that he knew nothing of the facts, but that he heard that the three gentlemen brought a number of these to the College of Maynooth, and as they went over it, they thrust them into every little corner or curious hole—on every book-shelf, or in every bed, and so left the college. It was said sometime after, that several of the students were expelled for heresy, and it was believed that they had found these papers, and were led to reject a belief in Transubstantiation. He concluded by saying

that he had only mentioned this anecdote, and seeing his companion with a missal in his hand, and knowing that he understood Latin, he had asked him to see whether these things were really in the Roman Missal.

This gave a turn to our conversation, when I remarked that wherever the fault was, it certainly was not with him, who had only narrated the conduct of others. Our Roman Catholic friend acknowledged this, but added, that it was very wrong to throw any ridicule on the religion of others; and especially to invent such calumnies against the most sacred of all the doctrines of the Church. There was nothing of the kind in the Roman Missal, or he would reject them himself as much as any one in the world.

I then stated that there was a sacredness, a religiousness, on such subjects that ought to remove them beyond the pale of ridicule, but that often it was difficult to speak of some religions, without a sense of the ridiculous. In some countries, as in parts of Africa, when a man means to pray from his innermost soul he writes his prayer upon paper, and then swallows it, thinking it then a prayer in his heart! In other lands, as in Thibet, when a man would pray much, he writes his prayer on paper, and places it in a rotatory machine, and supposes that his prayer is multiplied by every turn of the wheel, and that he becomes thus a man of many prayers! Practices like these throw an air of the absurd and ridiculous upon religion, and tend to degrade it in the eyes of thinking men. Now the sin here would not be in the men, whose sense of the ridiculous is excited by such absurdities. The sin—and it is a great sin—is with those who invest religion with accessories that are ridiculous or absurd.

But, said the Roman Catholic, these are heathenish religions, and not real religion at all; and there is nothing in the Church of Rome that could excite the ridicule of any.

I stated quietly and very gently to him, that that was the very question between him and his companion—that his companion had heard that there were such things in the Roman Missal, and had asked him to read and inform him whether it

indeed was so. Now, I added, it is a sad and painful fact, that all he has stated is really in the Roman Missal, and surely you will allow that if the Church of Rome has printed such things in her Missal, it is she who is to bear the blame for inserting things so ridiculous and absurd—rather than those who expose them.

He said with great frankness, that if he thought such things were in the Missal, he would fling it into the sea from that spot where we then stood, and never would blame any man for ridiculing things so deserving of ridicule. He spoke with evident earnestness.

I then asked him for the Missal. He gave it to me at once, and opening the rubrics respecting the defects *de defectibus* and other matters, I asked him to read with me, as he understood Latin. I then read as follows—

“If the consecrated Host disappear either by an accident or by the wind, or by a miracle, or by having been eaten by any animal, and can not be found, then let another host be consecrated.”

Now here, I remarked, you believe that the consecrated Host is no longer bread, but Jesus Christ Himself—God Himself, no longer the creature, but the Creator, no longer bread but God; and yet here the Church of Rome supposes the marvelous absurdity of Jesus Christ—may God pardon the thought—being mislaid and lost by an accident!—carried away by the wind! and devoured by some animal!

I must do the man the justice, to say that he seemed shocked at this. I made him read it for himself, and he seemed more shocked than before. I then directed his attention to another rubric.

“If a spider, or a fly, or something else have fallen into the chalice before consecration, let him throw the wine into a suitable place, and place other wine in the chalice; let him mix a little water, offer it as above, and continue the Mass. If a fly or something of this kind have fallen *after consecration*, and nausea arise in the priest, let him take it out, and wash it with wine; at the end of the Mass, *let him burn it*, and let

the combustion and lotion of this kind be thrown into the sacrarium. But if he has no nausea nor fear of any danger, *let him take it with the blood.*"

In the old editions, I remarked, there is the case supposed of a mouse making away with Jesus Christ! Here however, we have only the case of a spider, or gnat, or fly, falling into the cup. And for this awful delinquency, the poor spider, or fly, is to be carefully washed and prepared, and then, as if it were a heretic, it is to be burned to death! But if the priest should be able to swallow it along with the wine, without danger of sickness of the stomach, he is desired so to take it. And the little transgressor, instead of being burned to death, is destined for the higher privilege of being swallowed by the priest!

Again: "If in winter *the blood be congealed* in the chalice, let the chalice be wrapt in *warm cloths*; if this does not succeed, let it be placed in *hot water* near the altar, provided it does not enter into the chalice, until it be melted."

Here our Creator, our God, the soul and Deity of Jesus Christ, are supposed to be frozen; and, as if He had no power to warm himself, the priests are to cover Him with warm cloths. And if He will not be softened by this, He is to be placed in hot water—in a warm bath till He is melted!

Again: "If through carelessness some of the blood of Christ have fallen—if indeed on the earth, or on the board, *let it be licked with the tongue*, and let the place itself be scraped as much as is sufficient, and let what has been scraped off be burned; and let the ashes be laid up in the sacrarium. But if it have fallen on the stone of the altar, *let the priest suck up the drop*: and let the place be well washed, and the ablution be thrown into the sacrarium. If a drop has come on the linen of the altar, and to the second linen—if even to the third, let the linen coverings be *thrice washed*, where the drop has fallen, placing the chalice under, and let the water of ablution be thrown into the sacrarium."

Here if the Lord Jesus should fall from the carelessness of the priest—as if the Lord could not take care of himself—

He is to be licked up by the priest, and there is to be washing of the linen, and scraping of the earth, or rubbing of the board, that none of Him remain there; whereas if it be really transubstantiated into Jesus Christ, as the Church of Rome would persuade us—if it really be Jesus Christ, and not merely wine, we might suppose He could go away of Himself, if He did not choose to remain.

How is it possible, I asked, to read such rubrics as these, sanctioning such strange absurdities, without either our sense of ridicule being intensely excited, or our whole soul shocked at their profanity? But there remained another, it gives inexpressible pain and sadness to read it, worse and more profane than all. It is as follows:

“If the priest vomit forth the Eucharist, if the species appear entire, let them be reverently taken (i. e., eaten again), unless nausea arise; for in that case, let the consecrated species be carefully separated, and let them be replaced in some sacred place, until they are corrupted, and afterward let them be thrown into the sacrarium. But if the species do not appear, let the vomit be burned, and the ashes be thrown into the sacrarium.”

Of this, I said, I would say nothing. It supposes the priest to receive his God, and then to vomit his God! I added that I had no desire to throw scorn or ridicule upon the Church of Rome; and though if so disposed, I could find abundant example in the biting sarcasms of the prophet Isaiah against the wooden gods of the heathen, and in the bitter irony of the prophet Elisha, against the idols of Baal, yet the very language of the Church of Rome herself has used—the very cases she herself has supposed—the very directions she herself has given—the very pages of the Roman Missal she herself has written—are more biting than any sarcasm that we could frame, and more bitter than any irony that we could utter. When she supposes a priest to vomit his God, and when she directs him to partake of it—to swallow it again, she exhibits herself, not only as the mother of superstitions, but also as the mother of abominations.

Ridicule assuredly is not the weapon with which to deal with such a system, however much it may deserve it or provoke it. It is weeping and shame and humiliation, that most become us, where any professing Church can expose the most sacred things of Christ to the jests of the scoffer, and the ridicule of the infidel.

During the reading of these rubrics, which I made our Roman Catholic companion read with me, he never spoke, but stood with lips closely compressed, his eyes cast down, and a troubled expression on his countenance. After a pause, he said that he had never before read that portion of the Missal; but now that he had seen it, he could no longer blame those who ridiculed the book, however little he liked ridicule against his Church. He then took the Missal from my hands, and with all his force he flung it over the steep cliff-like banks to perish in the sea, using the emphatic words, "I have done with the Missal!"

I took the opportunity of the casting away of the Missal to call his attention to "the casting away the word of the Lord of Hosts," which was charged against the unbelieving Jews.—Isaiah v. 24. It was the sin of the Church of Rome, that she practically cast it away. And while enlarging on the value, the usefulness, the power of the Holy Scriptures, I expressed a hope, that as he had cast away the word of his Church, so he might now be induced to take up the Word of his God.

One observation led to another, especially as his mind was still dwelling on our former subject, and he was asking questions respecting it. I was induced thus, while walking homeward toward my inn, having been accompanied a large portion of my way by both the men, to state again that whatever were the evils connected with ridicule and sarcasm in reference to religious tenets, they belonged to those who held and taught ridiculous and absurd tenets, rather than to those who exposed their ridiculous and absurd character.

I illustrated this by specifying the doctrine of Transubstantiation. In order to uphold that doctrine in the Church of

Rome, it is taught that our Lord celebrated the first Mass—that in instituting the sacrament of the last supper, he celebrated the first sacrifice of the Mass. This is broadly asserted in most of the catechisms of the Church of Rome. It is essential to the Mass that the celebrating priest shall himself partake of the elements in both kinds, shall partake of the consecrated bread and the consecrated wine; at least, it is so asserted in that Church; so that if our Lord celebrated Mass on that occasion, He must have partaken of it Himself. Now the difficulty is this—one that, were it not for the sacredness of the subject, and the religiousness of all its associations, might awaken unmeasured ridicule—If our blessed Lord, in consecrating the bread and wine, did really, truly, substantially change or transubstantiate them into Himself, into his own body, and blood, and soul; and divinity—if our blessed Lord did all this, as the Church of Rome teaches, then He must have held Himself in his own hands, and given Himself to his apostles to eat, and they must have eaten and swallowed Him, as all the while He was sitting at the table before them! And this not once, but twice; first when He gave the bread, and afterward when He gave the cup.

“Well, sir,” he said, with a calm and quiet manner, “strange as it may seem to you—ridiculous and absurd as it may seem to you—I believe it. The Church has declared it. The Church believes it—and I believe it.” He added immediately afterward, that He could not be surprised at persons regarding it as ridiculous and absurd, who did not believe the Church.

I then said—we both were speaking in the most friendly manner, and were on the frankest terms—that that was not the only difficulty. By the doctrine of the sacrifice of the Mass, the officiating priest must partake himself of the sacrifice, whether there are or are not other communicants. On the occasion, therefore, of the last supper, our blessed Lord must, according to the Church of Rome, have partaken of the sacrament; and thus, not once, but twice—first on eating the bread, and then on taking the wine—He must have eaten and

swallowed Himself! Now I appeal to yourself, I said in all earnestness, whether a Church, which teaches so monstrous a thing as this, is not guilty of throwing upon religion the utmost amount of ridicule, and exposing it to the scoff of an unbelieving world. It is enough to make good men doubt whether most to weep in sorrow and sadness, or to pray for the annihilation of such a Church.

He seemed to feel the grossness of this consequence, but suggested that it was not clear in Scripture that our Lord Himself partook of this sacrament.

My reply to this was, that I agreed with him that it was not so clearly stated in Scripture; but that the difficulty, unhappily, was that the Church of Rome had clearly asserted it; teaching that our Lord, on that occasion, celebrated the first sacrifice of the Mass, and that it was necessary to the being of that sacrifice, that the celebrating priest should himself partake of it. The Church of Rome had herself created the difficulty.

He acknowledged this. But he never swerved from his position throughout a long conversation that ensued. He always stated, when hard pressed, that the Church believed it, and therefore he believed it. This, after a time, led us from our first subject into that which concerned the authority of the Church.

After we had parted from him, the Scripture reader accompanied me a little further.

I gave him some precautionary advice as to arguments derived from ridicule—that the sense of the ridiculous was very strong in the Irish character, stronger than in most nations—that for that cause it was possible it might cut further and deeper than might be wise or good—and that therefore it should never be resorted to unless with extreme discretion. I added that ridicule often shook men out of one set of opinions, but never landed them in another.

We soon after parted. The seeds that were then sowing in that country, have since been bringing forth fruit abundantly.

I had yet some miles before me, and had some time for re-

flection, and my thoughts ran on the mistakes that are often made in the conduct of controversy. How often we run into the vice of attacking the opinions of others instead of simply illustrating our own, and how often we begin by selecting the very points on which we differ, thus exciting and provoking collision and opposition, instead of those points on which we may be agreed, and which would therefore tend to make us bear the more willingly with each other. I am convinced that this latter is the best and truest process, and incomparably the most successful.

HALF-COMMUNION.

The state of Ireland twenty-five Years ago—Controversy and Conversions—True Mode of Controversy—Half-Communion—Institution—Primitive Practice—Admitted by Councils of Constance and Trent—The withdrawal of the Cup—Arguments in its favor examined—Whether administered to the Apostles as Priests—The Argument of Concomitance—The History of this Controversy—Jacobel de Myss and John of Leyden—Their Arguments—The Civil War that ensued—Motives assigned for withholding the Cup—Other Arguments examined.

THE following paper was written twenty-five years ago. It was a time of much inquiry and discussion on the doctrines at issue between the Roman and Protestant Churches. In no place was it for a time attended with happier results than in the parish in which I held a cure. A great majority were Roman Catholics; among these a very considerable number had resolved to read the Holy Scriptures for themselves, and form their own judgments on the topics so generally discussed around them. For many months scarcely a day passed without one or more of them asking my solution of the difficulties under which they labored; and the result was, that one hundred and ten individuals withdrew from the Church of Rome and entered the Church of England.

On each Sunday, as in the communion-service of our Church I had concluded the reading of the Nicene Creed, I paused for a few moments. One or two or more pew-doors were then opened, and one or more persons, till then always Roman Catholics, advanced to the communion rails, each accompanied by two of the Protestant parishioners. I had carefully examined them previously. They stated before the church their desire to be received as members of the Church of England. And when their religious opinions and moral character were

avouched by their Protestant neighbors who accompanied them, they were received by me into the congregation. This continued for several months with scarcely the omission of a single Sunday. The strangeness of the scene, occurring as it did in a retired country parish, created great excitement.

It could not continue long. As one of these converts rose the morning after he had been thus received, and opened the door of his house, he perceived his grave already prepared—already dug before his door, and found a notice requiring him to return to the Church of Rome or prepare immediately for his grave! The following night a number of men dashed open the door of his house—asked whether he intended to comply with their commands—on receiving a refusal they beat him dreadfully, and then with a vessel of water they proceeded to rebaptize him forcibly into the Church he had forsaken! Then smashing to atoms every article of furniture in the house they departed. This man continued faithful, and one of those misguided fellows was convicted of the offense and transported.

There was another still more painful affair. The school-master of the Roman Catholic school had been reading the Holy Scriptures for some time, and at last announced his intention of going to the parish church and there renouncing the Church of Rome. When the day arrived, he left his cottage at the usual hour, but never reached the church. On that holy day—that day of rest, and peace, and love, he was waylaid—his brains dashed out, and thus he was atrociously murdered on the high-road between his cottage and the church! The New Testament and some Protestant tracts were found in his pockets. The murderers were never discovered.

A few more incidents of a similar character spread a terror through the neighborhood. Fear seized upon every one. The conversions ceased, and immediately the population began to emigrate. The converts were among the first that went, and they were soon followed by many who sought in a far distant clime the religious freedom that was denied them in their fatherland.

It was during this period, and when much engaged in practical controversy, that the following paper was written. It was at the request of one who is now in another and happier world.

In all conversations with true-hearted and earnest members of the Church of Rome, it is of importance to avoid a tone or spirit of controversy—not avoiding the discussions of essential differences, but discussing them, as far as possible, in a non-controversial manner. We too often seek for some point in dispute—seize it with avidity, and in a pugnacious spirit we proceed to argue which is right and which is wrong. The tendency of this is to alienate rather than unite men. It would be infinitely better in every way, and far more successful, if we sought rather some point on which we are sure to be in accord—to commence the conversation, not on points on which we are at issue, and which would at once awaken a spirit of resistance, but on principles that are common to both Churches. This process leads to a kindlier tone, and a more free and frank expression of the inner feelings. It tends to establish confidence, and when once this is established, there will be little difficulty in laying down some broad principles upon which any argument may afterward be based. A wise controversialist will always use such admitted principle—such acknowledged truth as the right arm of his after-discussion.

I would illustrate this.

It is not difficult to dwell on the example of Jesus Christ as the perfect model which we should follow. It is easy as well as pleasant to dilate on His mercy and goodness, and love and benevolence. It is easy as well as profitable, to dwell on His purity and holiness, and His wonderful life and death. It is easy to present Him as the perfection of human nature, and therefore as One whose example we should follow in all that is possible. Whatever be the example He set should be the object of our earnest imitation, so earnest as that we should feel a sacredness and religiousness in it, and feel that we are departing from Christ in exact proportion as

we are departing from the example he has left for our imitation. Every Roman Catholic will readily assent to this, and therefore in this we have a truth or principle in common, on which we can safely argue.

It is also not difficult to dwell on the sacredness that invests all his words and precepts. All that came from his lips was full of life and light and love, and will be felt to possess such a sacred religiousness and authority and majesty that every mouth must be stopped—every objection silenced—every argument set at naught—every thought suppressed that comes in collision with his words. Neither man nor Church can demand any thing that is clearly opposed to his words. When he has spoken, all mankind must be silenced. The question is already decided, *Causa finita est* ; every Roman Catholic will acquiesce in this, and therefore here again there will be a common principle.

It is not difficult too to come into accord as to the deep and essential sacredness of the sacraments. It is felt by all, and the feeling is probably as deep and profound among the members of the Church of Rome, as among ourselves, that as they are the rites instituted by Christ Himself, as the signs and seals of our covenant relationship, so they ought to possess a peculiar sacredness of character in our eyes. And although there may be a difference between us as to the number of sacraments, yet there can be no difference in reference to those of Baptism, and the Lord's Supper, which are fully admitted by both alike, as being entitled to a peculiar, reverential, scrupulous and hallowed care, that nothing be done contrary to the words or opposed to the example of Jesus Christ respecting them.

These principles will be readily admitted even by those who refuse to recognize the Holy Scriptures as the sole rule of faith and practice, and who refuse to submit to any private interpretation of them. These principles being settled, it will be easy to object against the practice of HALF-COMMUNION in the Church of Rome, as a practice that prevents the possibility of our joining her communion.

Her practice is this—The priest, who officiates, consecrates both bread and wine; he then himself partakes of both kinds—both the bread and the wine, and then, when administering to the people, he gives them only in one kind—only the bread, and not the wine. This is the practice of the Church of Rome. The priest receives in *both kinds*, the communicants receive only in *one kind*.

The argument is as follows :

It has been admitted that we should strictly follow the *words of our Lord*—that we should as far as possible imitate *the example of our Lord*—that we should be specially careful to do this in so sacred a matter as *the sacrament of the Lord's Supper*. Now, the practice of HALF-COMMUNION in the Church of Rome is admitted to be contrary to our Lord's words, and opposed to our Lord's example.

Those words and example are as follows :

"And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to his disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; for this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins."—Matt. xxvi. 26, 27, 28.

"And as they did eat, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to them, and said, Take, eat, this is my body. And he took the cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them: and they all drank of it. And he said unto them, This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many."—Mark, xiv. 22-24.

"And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me. Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you."—Luke, xxii. 19, 20.

"For I have received of the Lord that which I also delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread: and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken

for you, this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This do ye, as often as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, ye shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread and drink of that cup."—1 Cor. xi. 23–28.

When these four distinct and independent narratives are read, it will be seen that they all agree in the one great fact, that our Lord *instituted* this sacrament in *both kinds*—that He *administered* it in *both kinds*—that the apostles *received* it in *both kinds*. They also agree in this important fact that our Lord on giving the bread, said precisely the same as on giving the wine, and gave identically the same command on giving the wine as on giving the bread. The only distinction discernible is, that according to St. Matthew, He added the speciality on administering the cup, "Drink **YE ALL** of it," as if he foresaw with prophetic eye the future withdrawal of the cup, and gave his special commandment as a warning of it. And in like manner, there is added in St. Mark the further speciality, "and **THEY ALL** drank it;" as if to record for all posterity the fact that, in the original institution, when our Lord himself administered, and the apostles themselves received, they received the wine, as well as the bread. These specialities were not without design, and are very significant; and the after-history of the Church has proved their importance, and illustrated their true significance; for in the Church of Rome, no priest can now say to his communicant, "drink **YE ALL** of this," nor relate of them, that "**THEY ALL** drank of it," for the Roman priest who officiates, reserves the cup for himself alone, refusing to administer it to the whole body of communicants—whether priests or laity. His practice is thus in direct opposition both to *the words* and to *the example* of Christ himself, in the sacred matter of this sacrament.

When the subject has been placed in this light before the more candid and earnest members of the Church of Rome, especially if it be done with kindness and courtesy, and the

language be fashioned so as to be free from bitterness or scorn, it is sure to act strongly upon them. In nine cases out of ten, they are not aware of the distinctness of these gospel narratives. They are not generally acquainted with the Scripture narrative. And they are thus taken by surprise. When I have observed this, I have usually added—that there was a further consideration that aggravated the conduct of the Church of Rome in this matter, namely, that it was adopted and enforced with the knowledge—the avowed knowledge, that it was opposed to the words and contrary to the example of Christ himself, and to the practice of the apostles, and of all the primitive Church.

The canon of the Council of Constance admits this.

“This Holy General Council of Constance assembled by the Holy Ghost, declares, decrees, defines, that **ALTHOUGH** (*licet*) Christ did after supper institute the holy sacrament, and administer it to his disciples in both kinds, yet **NOTWITHSTANDING THIS**, the laudable authority of the sacred canons, etc.—and **ALTHOUGH** this sacrament was received by the faithful in both kinds in the primitive Church, etc.—the Holy Council decrees,” etc.

The decree of the Council of Trent is to the same effect.

“**ALTHOUGH** in the beginning of the Christian religion, in the administration of the sacrament of the Eucharist, the custom of receiving in both kinds was not unfrequent, yet in process of time the practice being very widely changed, and having been so changed for wise and just causes, the Church has approved this custom of communicating under one kind, decrees by law that it shall so continue,” etc.

These two decrees are the laws that regulate this practice of **HALF-COMMUNION** in the Church of Rome. They admit that this practice is contrary to the original institution of Christ, and to the practice of the primitive Church; they confess that “**ALTHOUGH**” Jesus Christ has appointed it and the apostles have administered it, and the primitive Church has received it in one way, yet **NOTWITHSTANDING** this, the Church of Rome adopts and decrees another and contrary way!

There are very few of the more enlightened members of the Church of Rome who do not keenly feel this consideration, founded on the admissions of the decrees of these two General Councils; they are so broad and plain an admission of the unscriptural and novel character of her present practice. And when I have pressed this upon them, I have gone a step further. Indeed I have always been unwilling to let the subject pass from me until I have added one further consideration.

I allude to the consideration that the privileges and blessings and graces, which Jesus Christ has connected with that sacramental memorial of his dying love, are connected only with that which He has instituted and as He has appointed it. When, therefore, the Church of Rome has altered His institution to which his promises are annexed, and has substituted another institution of her own in its stead, she has no reason to expect the blessings, and privileges, and graces connected with the sacrament of Jesus Christ. She has forfeited them by departure from the appointed sacrament. Instead of administering this sacrament, she administers only half a sacrament. Instead of receiving the communion, her members receive only half a communion. This sacrament was originally instituted by our Lord, in order to be the memorial of his dying love, to be taken in loving remembrance of the breaking of His body and the shedding of His blood on the cross; and for the Church of Rome to take away the memorial of that precious blood—that blood of which we read that “it is the blood that maketh atonement for the soul,” and “without shedding of blood there is no remission of sins,” and “we are redeemed—by the precious blood of Christ,” and “His blood cleanseth from all sin,” and “Thou hast redeemed us to God by thy blood,” and “they washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb,” and “the Church of God which he hath purchased with his own blood;” for the Church of Rome to withhold the memorial of this precious blood in that very sacrament in which Jesus Christ so especially appointed it, is an act of impiety and sacrilege against

Christ's own institution, which has no parallel in the whole history of the Church, and which more than justifies the refusal of all Protestants to take part in her communion.

This argument has weight with those members of the Church of Rome who are examining the points at issue between the Churches—searching after truth—inquiring for themselves, and therefore prepared simply and sincerely to accept or reject such argument on its merits. I have never met one such who did not give up this practice of **HALF-COMMUNION** as untenable, and as one that ought never to have been adopted by the Church of Rome.

But there are two classes of persons who give very different answers to the foregoing argument. There are some who are sincere, earnest, and candid, always prepared to ascribe due weight to an argument, and to acknowledge their inability to answer it, even though remaining unconvinced by it. There are others, too, who affect to see no force in any, even the most conclusive argument, and who endeavor to escape it by some subtle and unworthy device, miserable and weak in itself, though perhaps difficult and perplexing to the inexperienced to answer.

With the former and more candid class, it is frequently suggested that the arrangements, and forms, and ceremonies of the sacraments are matters for ecclesiastical regulation—that as the cup had been withheld for important reasons, so again it might be restored for important reasons—that it was not an article of faith that must remain unchanged and unchangeable forever, but only an article of discipline that might at any time be altered, by the restoration of the cup by the very same authority which withheld it. Not unfrequently such persons express regret that it ever was withheld, and avow their wishes, that the Pope may see cause to restore it.

I have always answered this, and arguments of the same nature, in one and the same way. I have answered that it only placed the matter in a worse position than before, because, if the withdrawal of the cup had been, as an article of faith, absolutely and unavoidably necessary, then that very necessity

would be its apology and defense, necessity is excuse sufficient. But when it is argued that it is merely a matter of ecclesiastical arrangement—that it is not unalterable—that the cup can be restored, then it only increases the impiety and sacrilege of the act which is so continued against the plain words and example of Christ himself, of his Apostles, and of the whole primitive Church.

A further argument may sometimes be urged to the effect that the withholding the cup can not be rightly regarded as a matter of discipline. The commandment of Christ is clear and express, and his example is unquestionable. The use of the cup, therefore, in the sacrament is a matter of obedience to him. And it never was in the province of the Church, to set aside his commandments. We read, indeed, of some who “set aside the commandments of God, that they might keep their own traditions.” But they were not the Church of Christ.

The other and second class of persons in the Church of Rome, to whom I have referred, as always endeavoring to escape from an argument by some subtle and unworthy and miserable device, usually meet the argument in a different way. They first admit that our Lord administered, and the Apostles received the sacrament in both kinds, and then they add, that it was because the apostles were priests, and that it was *as priests* it was so administered to them, and thus they argue, that this original institution is no reason for the administration of the cup to the lay-members.

I have given two answers to this—

I have told my opponent, with as much courtesy as possible, that I felt he urged it with the hope of perplexing me, rather than with his own belief of its conclusiveness—that he knew that the practice of the Church of Rome was never to administer the cup to either priest or layman—to any communicant whatever—that he knew that the officiating priest, as a part of the sacrificial ceremonial of the Mass, received the cup himself, but that he never administered it to any one, whether priest or layman; that even at the more solemn occasions,

when as in the High Mass, the officiating priest is assisted by one or two others, still even to them he does not administer the cup, so that if any number of priests were in attendance for the communion, he would not administer the cup to any.* This is the law of the Church of Rome. How different from that of Christ and His Apostles! If this law of the Church of Rome had been in the mind of Christ, when He instituted this sacrament, He should have reserved the cup entirely to Himself, and not administered it at all to any of the Apostles! The fact that He did administer it to them all, desiring them all to drink it—"drink YE ALL of it," and the fact that "THEY ALL drank it," are demonstrative against the novelty of HALF-COMMUNION in the Church of Rome.

I have found this mode of meeting the subject have its effect. I have never known even an attempt to answer it.

The other reply which I have sometimes given and which is well-known, is, that if our Lord did indeed administer this sacrament to the apostles in their character of priests, then the laity have nothing whatever to do with it. If it was only *as priests*, they received *the cup*, and consequently they who are only laymen have no right to the cup, then also it was only *as priests* they received *the bread*, and consequently they, who are only laymen, have no right to the bread. And thus we arrive at the conclusion that the laity have no right to receive this sacrament at all!

The principal argument however, upon which the members of the Church of Rome rest, and on which the Council of Trent endeavors to justify her practice, is that which is usually called—the argument of *concomitance*. This argument is, I believe, urged sincerely, and seems to be the great dependence of every class of mind among them.

It deserves to be fairly and fully stated.

It is founded on a belief of Transubstantiation. In that doctrine they teach that the bread is literally and substantially changed in its nature and properties into the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, and that the wine is *as* like

* The cup is ministered to a Bishop at his consecration.

manner changed as to all its natural properties, into His blood and body. It is thus held that in the consecrated bread there is naturally and truly the blood as well as the body, and that in the consecrated wine, there is the body as well as the blood. Holding thus that both are contained in the bread, they argue that to receive in one kind is sufficient, inasmuch as by receiving in either the bread or the wine, no matter which, the communicant receives together both the body and the blood. This process of reasoning is usually called—the argument of concomitance, and is the chief argument on which HALF-COMMUNION is defended.

The natural answer to this is a denial of Transubstantiation on which it is founded. I prefer however dealing differently with it; I do not like to seem always denying their assumptions, and therefore I say in reply, that it is a matter of indifference to me, so far as HALF-COMMUNION is concerned, whether Transubstantiation be true or untrue. That dogma, whether true or untrue, does not touch the real question, and I have therefore, for argument's sake, often admitted that doctrine, and still pressed my argument against HALF-COMMUNION, as strongly as before, feeling that my argument was equally cogent, whether Transubstantiation was received or rejected—believed or denied: That my argument was, that the half-communion of the Church of Rome, was contrary to *the original institution* of our Lord—contrary to the example of our Lord—contrary to the plain language of Holy Scripture—contrary to the practice of the apostles—contrary to the custom of the primitive Church. This was my argument as against this practice of giving only the bread, without the cup; and this argument stands clear and independent of any belief or disbelief of Transubstantiation; Half-communion may be or may not be consistent with Transubstantiation, but certainly it is not consistent with the original institution of our Lord; and the idea that Transubstantiation or concomitance justifies this Half-communion, may well lead to the inference, that neither Transubstantiation nor concomitance were the belief of our Lord, or of His apostles, or of the primitive Church, inasmuch

as they administered the sacrament in both kinds, as if the idea of Transubstantiation or concomitance had never entered their minds. It may lead to all this inference, but it certainly does not touch my argument, which is—that this practice of administering in only one kind—administering only the bread and withholding the cup—is inconsistent with the practice of our Lord, of His apostles, and of the primitive Church. It may be consistent with Transubstantiation, but it is not consistent with the original institution of our Lord.

To this, I have never known a reply that deserved a moment's consideration. As long as the argument is kept to our Lord's original institution—and to the necessity of adhering to that institution—as long as the argument is kept to this, there can never be a reply.

The history of this controversy supplies a new and additional argument against the practice of the Church of Rome, and I have often used it with effect, at least I have known it exercise a considerable influence on some minds. Transubstantiation, which had been agitated in the Church for above two centuries before, had been declared to be the doctrine of the Church of Rome for the first time at the Council of the Lateran in 1225. The not unnatural result of that doctrine was to generate very widely the idea of the non-necessity of receiving in both kinds. The dogma of Transubstantiation and the practice of half-communion went thus hand in hand; mutually supporting and justifying each other. But, in the fourteenth century, the casual meeting of Jacobel de Mysa and John de Leyden led to results which then were little anticipated. These men, zealous and learned and active clergymen, were devout members of the Church of Rome, and were earnest believers in Transubstantiation. Like most members of that Church, they imagined that our Lord's discourse in the vi. of John was designed to apply to the sacrament. In conversing on that remarkable discourse, they were impressed with the fact that it describes the drinking of the blood as being as necessary as the eating of the flesh. They dwelt on the words, "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man and

drink his blood, ye have no life in you; whose eateth my flesh *and drinketh my blood* hath eternal life." In these words they observed that they could have no life unless they drank the blood, as well as ate the flesh. And the promise of life was only to those who drank the blood, as well as ate the flesh. The awful warning is against those who do not receive *both*. The gracious promise is only to those who receive *both*. Applying this language, as these men did, to the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, they at once drew the inference that the cup was as necessary as the bread—that there was no promise to half-communion—and that in order to have eternal life they must communicate in both kinds. In this they found confirmation in the language of the Apostle, where he alludes to this sacrament. "As often as ye eat this bread *and drink this cup*, ye do show the Lord's death till he come. Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread *and drink this cup* of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, *and drink of that cup*. For he that eateth *and drinketh* unworthily, eateth *and drinketh* damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body."—1 Cor. xi. 26–29.

The inference from this language is, that one kind is as essential as the other—that both are essential to the integrity of communion—and that whatever be the blessings, privileges and graces connected with this sacrament, they are connected with it only as received in both kinds, drinking of the cup, as well as eating of the bread. These men, under this conviction, taught that it was necessary to salvation that all communicants should receive the bread and then receive the cup, and they immediately introduced into the churches at Prague the administration of the sacrament in both kinds. The city of Prague and all Bohemia soon declared in favor of the restoration of the cup. This awakened, as by an earthquake, as by a volcanic eruption, the whole energies and resentment of Rome. And the unhappy resolve of the Papal court to put down this beginning of the Reformation, not by the holy weapons of Christian argument, but by the brute force of

arms, kindled the flames of a civil war of a century's continuance. It was in the midst of this controversy that the Council of Constance was convened—a Council celebrated for that decree by which it claims for the Church of Rome the right to go against the words of the Lord, to alter the original institution of Christ, and to depart from the acknowledged practice and teaching of the apostles and the primitive Church,* and a Council stained by treachery and blood, as having induced John Huss and Jerome of Prague, the reformers of that age, to attend the Council on the solemn faith of a safe conduct, and then ordered both to be burned at the stake. But “the blood of the martyrs” has ever proved “the seed of the Church.” The people of Bohemia refused to submit to the decision of the Council; frightened and indignant at the treacherous burning of their leaders, they flew to arms, and never laid down their arms till they secured their object—the restoration of the cup in the sacrament! To this day the Emperor of Austria, as king of Bohemia, has the right to receive the cup in the sacrament.

As all these people were devout believers in Transubstantiation—devout believers in the notion of concomitance, it is evident they did not regard that dogma as an adequate reason for the withdrawing of the cup. They felt that our Lord instituted this sacrament in both kinds—that the Apostles administered it in both kinds—that the primitive Church com-

* The reasons assigned in the Council by sage and venerable men, for so strange an alteration of the institution, were surpassingly extravagant, and some of them amusing enough. One pleaded that there was danger of spilling the cup, and the spilling the blood of God was an evil of too great magnitude to be periled by restoring the cup. A second argued that so many persons had bad breaths, and it was shocking to persons of piety, as well as untasteful to persons of refinement, that such impure breaths should pollute the blood of God. Another pleaded, that as men then wore their beards unshaven, it was an intolerable sacrilege that the blood of God should be wasted as well as defiled by adhering to the beards of men. And for this and other wise and discreet causes, these grave and reverend fathers recommended the cup to be taken from all the women, who have no beards at all!

municated in both kinds—and that they received no real sacrament whatever, when they received only half the sacrament. It was in their eyes a sacrilegious dividing of the sacrament, and a rendering it as useless as it was lifeless.

The answer usually made to this—besides the argument of concomitance already noticed—is that in the Scripture narrative we frequently read of only bread without any mention of the cup; as when the two disciples were at Emmaus with our Lord. “He was known of them *in breaking of bread*,” and again when the Apostle was at Troas, “upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together *to break bread*, Paul preached unto them.” On passages like these, they argue that there is no mention of the cup, and that, therefore, we may suppose that the cup was not deemed an essential of the sacrament.

The answer is easy. The expression of “breaking bread,” was a common phrase expressive of any social meal, and by a figure usual in all languages and in all countries, a part is put for the whole. If among us we speak of taking dinner, it does not necessarily imply the absence of wine, or if we speak of taking tea, it is not intended to imply that there was nothing to eat with it. In precisely the same way the phrase of “breaking bread” merely implied taking a meal, and the Christians of the apostles’ days used constantly to have a table in common—a table supplied by the more wealthy members, at which they with the poorer members used to sit and eat together in sign of Christian love and fellowship. St. Paul alludes to this in 1 Cor. xi. 20, and says, “When ye come together therefore into one place, this is not to eat the Lord’s supper.” These meetings at one common table—these reunions of holy brotherhood among the Christians—these reunions for “breaking of bread” and “eating,” were thus not for the administration of the sacrament, but for other purposes altogether; and besides this, there is a further consideration, which shows that this argument is not urged sincerely by our adversaries, namely that if these words do indeed refer to the sacrament, and if indeed it be argued that in mentioning only

"breaking bread," they imply the absence of the cup from the sacrament, then they will prove too much, for they will prove that the priest as well as the communicants had no cup, but only the bread—that there was only the bread and no consecration of wine, which according to the Church of Rome is essential to the service—so essential as that without it there is no sacrament and no Mass. And thus their own argument on the mention of bread without the mention of the cup, only proves against themselves, that there could have been no allusion to the sacrament in these passages.

But now to conclude this subject. There are four distinct accounts of the original institution of this sacrament in the Holy Scriptures. In every one of these, the communicating in the cup is as prominent as the communicating in the bread. Whatever be the blessings, privileges, and graces annexed by the promises of Christ to this sacrament, belong to it only as he instituted it; and when the Church of Rome has altered this sacrament—has disobeyed His command—has refused to follow His example—has renounced the practice of the apostles, and has departed from the practice of the primitive Church, she has no right to expect the blessings, and privileges, and graces connected with the sacrament. On the other hand the Protestant Churches, adhering to the very form as Christ instituted it; without alteration or mutilation, possess the true sacrament, and enjoy not a half-communication merely, but a whole communion, and on the faith of the promises of Christ, claim the blessings and privileges and graces belonging to it.

PURGATORY.—I.

Scene by a Bed of Death—An awakened Romanist—A Belief in Purgatory—The Doctrine of the Church of Rome respecting Sin and Purgatory—The Blood of Christ the alone Mode of removing Sin—The Language of Scripture—The Romish Distinction between the Guilt and Punishment of Sin—The true Message of the Gospel—The inconsistency of Purgatory with Extreme Unction.

I WAS sitting one day in the cottage of an humble and religious man. His wife and children were like himself altogether under the influence of religion. His days were now drawing to their close, and every thing promised a happy and a glorious sunset to his life. He was always a happy Christian, one whose thoughts as to the past were ever cheerful in the remembrance of mercies, and, as to the future, were invariably joyous in the anticipation of the promises. I was in conversation with him and his family on the subject of his approaching death, and on the way in which the sting of death was removed, and its fears changed to hopes, and its terrors annihilated before the realization of the promises. I had touched on the words of St. Paul, where he said, "I have a desire to depart and to be with Christ."—Phil. i. 23. And again where he said, "I am ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought the good fight, I have kept the faith, I have finished my course. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will give me in that day, and not to me only, but also to them that love his appearing."—2 Tim. iv. 6. While speaking on this, many of the neighbors came in and sat down to hear. Among these were several members of the Church of Rome.

There was soon collected a little congregation, of about some twenty or twenty-five persons; and wishing to use the occasion, I opened my Bible and read a few verses, and spoke freely in connection with our previous conversation. Having dwelt on the happy deaths of true Christians expecting to pass to their rest and their glory on their departure from the body, a remark was made by a Roman Catholic who seemed very thoughtful and earnest. It was to the effect that a man could not die happy, who was expecting to be immediately conveyed to the fires of Purgatory. This observation attracted the marked attention of all other Roman Catholics present, and naturally led me to contrast the faith of the Protestant with the faith of the Romanist in the matter of approaching death. One anticipating a change from this world to the joys of Heaven, the other expecting a change from this life to the fires of Purgatory—one looking forward to death, as the entrance upon a world of happiness, and the other anticipating the moment of death as a plunge into all the horrors of Purgatorian fire. I dwelt on this contrast; and as both Protestants and Romanists were present, the contrast was vivid enough in its effects on their countenances. I could appeal personally to both parties. I could appeal to their own experience and observation among their families and friends; some dying happy, and rejoicing in the hope of Heaven; others dying fearful and anxious in the prospect of Purgatory.

One observation led naturally to another, and the questions, earnestly but most respectfully put to me by the Roman Catholics present, led me to enlarge on the true nature of religion, and on the comforting character of Christianity. The religion of revelation pours a flood of comfort around the couch of sickness, and spreads a beautiful halo of light around the bed of death. The sickness is but for a little while, and the death is but for a moment, and then unutterable glories are streaming as a shower of splendor before the eye. Death is swallowed up in victory. The grave is spoiled of its prey. One is but the antechamber of heaven; the other is but the usher that conducts us to the presence. As he stands upon

the threshold of eternity, the dying Christian catches, as it were, brighter and happier glimpses of the glories that never fade. He no longer shrinks from the grave, or trembles at death, but, as he hears its footfall, his cheek flushes with high hopes; and, as he feels its cold hand, his heart beats high with longings, for his hour has come. He sees as it were, the gates of heaven; he hears, as it were, the songs of angels; he feels, as it were, the balmy breezes of the skies; and his eye brightens, and his cheek flushes, and his heart throbs, and his tongue proclaims, "I am ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand; I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing." The dying Christian is the happy, the rejoicing, the triumphant Christian. He sees his crown; he sees his throne; he sees his inheritance; and he pillows his head in peace, for he knows he will awaken on the bosom of his God; and the last song is the song of triumph—"O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" But far and away from this, is the death of the Romanist. He sees in the grave but the antechamber of the fiery furnace, and sees in death but the usher that conducts him to a tormenting Purgatory. He lies on the bed of sickness; yet that sickness is more endurable than the fiery furnace. He lies on the couch of agony; yet that agony is more tolerable than a tormenting Purgatory. He has no lights of an approaching glory to illumine his darkness. He has no hope of an opening heaven to cheer his spirit. He stands shrinking, trembling, resisting, till his eye is dim, and his cheek is pale, and horrors upon horrors gather on his heart; and he dies with thoughts of Purgatory instead of thoughts of Heaven, and visions of suffering instead of visions of glory. The Christian dies, expecting that hour to tread the gates of heaven. The Romanist dies, expecting that hour to feel the flames of Purgatory. One dies rejoicing, the other

dies lamenting. Oh! periah the doctrine, that can thus mar the hopes, and blast the visions of the dying Christian!

Some time was consumed in replying to questions, sometimes simple, sometimes subtle; but the few and emphatic words of the sick man, in support of my statements of the glorious hopes of the Christian had a powerful effect. They were few and simple, but earnest and true. We all joined together in prayer, and I withdrew.

A few days after this, I learned that one of the Roman Catholics present on this occasion, had been affected to an unusual degree, and in an unusual manner—that his mind had been so disturbed and his feelings so agitated by something that had been said, that he could not rest that night in his bed—that he was in such a state that he felt obliged to rise and seek the open air to cool his burning head—that he spent the remainder of the night sitting on the cold rocks, or walking disturbedly on the mountain-side, where his cottage stood—that since then his whole thoughts seemed absorbed and lost in the one subject of his soul's salvation—that he believed himself a lost man, without hope and without help—and that so completely was he overwhelmed by these feelings, that he was unable to attend to his ordinary work and necessary occupation.

I saw at once that it was necessary to see this man. It is true that he was a member of the Church of Rome, but it seemed no less true that some new and strong conviction had laid hold upon his mind. I thought that there might be an opportunity in the then state of his feelings, of leading him to the real sources of peace. I sent for him.

When he came, he looked worn and haggard—wan and pale. He had the appearance of wakeful nights and troubled days. He had evidently suffered much mentally. Whether it was remorse of conscience at some special sin, or a deep conviction of his unholy state in general, or a shrinking horror of his expected future, it was impossible for me to say; and it was some time before I could learn any thing from him. He was silent for a few moments after I spoke to him, but it was because he was unable to speak. A nervous choking

seemed to stifle his words, till a few kind and gentle expressions from me seemed to act upon him. He burst into a flood of tears and wept and sobbed as a child. I could not but feel for the poor fellow. He was young, and in the prime of life, a tall and handsome man—was married and had two children—had a small farm which he cultivated with his own hands—and now the strong man seemed as feeble and powerless as a little child.

After he had recovered, he told me that all he had suffered arose from what I had said on the subject of Purgatory—that till that evening, when he heard me speaking about death and the after-death, he had always believed in a Purgatory—that Purgatory was instituted for Catholics, and that hell was reserved for the Protestants—that he left the Protestants to their own fate, and always looked forward to Purgatory for himself; that he knew, and God knew, and no man knew so well as himself his own sins, and that he had been taught to look forward to suffering for a time in Purgatory, till he could atone for all and be saved in the end. And now, said he, in a paroxysm of feeling, you say there is no Purgatory!

The poor fellow seemed to find it difficult to convey his precise meaning. His words seemed to imply a deep and passionate sorrow that there was no Purgatory. He seemed to wish for it as a comfortable doctrine. I was obliged to question him as to his meaning.

He afterward explained that he was distracted between two different things which I had stated—that when I had shown there was no Purgatory, but only Hell after death for the sinful and unrepentant, he then felt there was no hope for him—that he had hoped that by suffering in Purgatory, and having Masses and prayers said for his soul, he might in the end be saved: but now he could hope this no longer. There was no Purgatory. It was gone—gone forever! And there was—now—nothing—but Hell! He uttered the awful words in a slow, solemn, low tone, that gave them an appalling significance. And a shudder seemed to pass over his whole frame.

He paused and gazed as if looking intently into another world.

I then spoke very gently—I felt keenly for him—to remind him, that when I had told them that there were no purgatorian fires after death, there yet was something else infinitely more powerful, and infinitely more efficacious for purging away sin before death.

O yes, yes, he exclaimed—the blood of Jesus—the blood of Jesus, “The blood of Jesus Christ His Son, cleanseeth from all sin.” Those were the very words you read from the Bible. They sunk into my very heart, and I remember them well. And this, he added, was the second thing that was on his mind. You have taken away all hope, he said, by taking away Purgatory, and then you raised my hopes—O so high!—by speaking of the blood of Jesus.

This led to a long conversation.

In order to a full understanding of all that passed, it will be well to state here the doctrine of the Church of Rome, respecting Purgatory. I had spoken long to him, on the power and preciousness of the blood of Christ, and I have seldom, if ever, witnessed the message of the Gospel receive a more full and free and happy response, than seemed to come from his heart. He seemed at once to believe, receive, and rejoice in it, but he would have me go over the arguments he had before heard from me against the being of a Purgatory. That this may be the more easily understood, the following digression may be inserted here.

The doctrine of the Church of Rome is, that there is a Heaven and a Hell—that one is for the eternal happiness of the saved, and the other for the everlasting misery of the lost. And in all this the creed of the Church of Rome is identical with the creed of the Church of England. But besides these, the Church of Rome holds that there is a third place—a place characterized by two properties; one being, that it is a *place of torment*, and the other being, that it is a *place of purgation*. To this place, from its supposed efficacy in purging away sin, they have given the appellation of PURGATORY.

They describe it as a *place of torment*. But as to the nature of its torments, the advocates of the Church of Rome seem to be divided. The opinion generally entertained is, that Purgatory is a region of fire, and that the souls undergo all the sufferings of fire. This too is the opinion embodied in the Catechism of the Council of Trent. "There is," says that catechism, "also **THE FIRE OF PURGATORY**, in which the souls of the just are purified by punishment *for a stated time*, to the end that they may be admitted into their eternal country, into which nothing that defileth, entereth."—Part i. c. 6. But some of the more modern advocates of that Church, feeling themselves hard pressed by our objections, have asserted that it is not quite certain—that it is not infallibly settled—that Purgatory is a region of fire. Some maintain that it is a fiery region, where the soul is tormented with fire; others, that it is a region without fire, where the soul is tormented with horrible dread. Both parties agree, however, that it is a region of suffering almost as horrible as Hell; the chief distinction being, that Purgatory was but temporary, while Hell was eternal.

They describe it as a *place of purgation*. To this place are consigned two classes of persons. 1. All who die under venial sins; that is, all who have not confessed and done penance for their venial sins. These persons are consigned to this place to undergo the measure of punishment due to such sins. 2. All who have committed mortal sins, and have confessed them, but have not performed all the enjoined penance. These persons are consigned to this place of torment, to undergo what remains of the punishment supposed to be due to such sins. Both these classes are supposed to settle the balance due upon their account, in the suffering of Purgatory.

The principle or doctrine, upon which these opinions are founded is this: They hold that there are two classes of sins. 1. Venial sins. These are supposed to be sins that are little sins—trivial sins; such as little lies and petty thefts. They are called venial, that is pardonable, as being too trivial to alienate the love of God, or, as they express it, to "break

charity;" and which therefore God may very well pardon, without any great stretch of His mercy, provided the sinner undergoes a suitable penance here or hereafter. 2. Mortal sins. These are supposed to be great sins—sins so great, as deservedly to damn the soul in hell; and if not confessed, absolved and satisfied for by penance in this world, assuredly to be followed by damnation in the world to come.

It is no part of my present object, to examine or expose the tendency of this most unscriptural doctrine of mortal and venial sin, though it lies at the root of one half the practical errors of the Church of Rome. My present object is to state what the principle and doctrine is, upon which the theory of Purgatory is founded. They hold respecting these two classes of sinners—they hold, respecting all sin, that if confessed it may be satisfied for by "temporal punishment" here or hereafter. Instead of regarding the punishment of the repentant sinner, as being laid by faith on Jesus Christ, according to the words of the prophet—"He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and with His stripes we are healed."—Isaiah liii. 5.—instead of thus regarding the sufferings of the believer as borne for him by Jesus Christ, when He endured the agony in the garden, and the sufferings in the judgment-hall, and the death on the cross—instead of this, they hold that the believer, however repentant of his sins, must undergo the "temporal punishment" *himself*, which is to satisfy for his sins. That "temporal punishment" is explained of the suffering of the body in penance in this life, or the suffering of the soul in the pains of Purgatory in the life to come. Those persons, therefore, who are guilty of mortal sins, which have been confessed, but which have not been satisfied for by penance, and those persons who are guilty of venial sins, whether confessed or not, are alike consigned to Purgatory, in order that by their suffering there they may satisfy for their sins.

It will at once be seen, that by an ingenious complication of the subject, a subtle advocate of the Church of Rome may perplex an unwary opponent. But still, the result that should

remain on the mind should be, that—excepting those who are doomed to hell, all others must pass through the sufferings of Purgatory, until they have balanced their account of sufferings. These persons are supposed to be in communion with the Church of Rome. The region of Purgatory is their special domain; while the members of the Protestant Church are carefully excluded. A Romanist indeed may enter there, but the destiny of the Protestant has been somewhat profanely described, as that of men who must “go further and fare worse.”

Thus much being premised, our conversation will be more intelligible.

I reminded him of the truth that had already so strongly affected him; namely, that the blood of Jesus Christ was the true means of atonement for the sinner. I read the words, “Behold the Lamb of God that *taketh away the sins of the world*,” and again, “The blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, *cleanseth from all sin*.” And I observed that if Christ has taken away the sins of his people there can be no need of a Purgatory to take them away again, and that if the blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin, emphasizing the words “*all sin*,” there can be no sin, venial or otherwise, remaining to be chased away by the fires of Purgatory.

He at once exclaimed, that the two things were inconsistent. They could not both be true. And he added, earnestly, that his hope must be in the blood of Jesus Christ—Blessed be His holy name!

I said that he was right, but that he might see how full and clear the Word of God was on the subject, I would read some other passages that showed that Christ and only Christ, by His blood, took away our sins. I then continued, we read that “We have redemption through His blood, the *forgiveness of sins*.”—Eph. i. 7. We read of Him as “having forgiven all trespasses, *blotting out* the hand-writing of ordinances that was against us.”—Col. ii. 14. We read, “Every branch that beareth fruit, He *purgeth* it, that it may bring forth more fruit.”—John xv. 2. We read, “How much more shall the

blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, *purge* your consciences from dead works to serve the living God?"—Heb. ix. 14. We read, "He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to *cleanse* us from all unrighteousness."—1 John i. 9. We read of those in glory, as those who have "*washed* their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."—Rom. vii. 14. Here, and in innumerable places of Holy Scripture we read that the purging away of sin—the purgation of the soul from sin, is the special result of the blood of Jesus Christ. It is described in those places as a "forgiveness," as a "blotting out," as a "purging," as a "cleansing," and as a "washing away of sin." There is no reference whatever to any other method of purging away sin, but the blood of Jesus Christ. And the power of that blood—in other words, the efficacy of the atonement on the cross, is described as extending to "all trespasses," and "all sins," and "all unrighteousness," and therefore, as extending not only to mortal, but also to venial sins. So when once the believer is cleansed, purged, washed, forgiven by Jesus Christ, there can remain nothing on the soul to be cleansed, purged, washed, or forgiven through the fires of Purgatory. To suppose with the Church of Rome, that something remains to be purged away in the fires of Purgatory, is practically to impeach the blood of Christ; for it is all one with supposing that all the sin was not purged away by the blood of Christ; it is all one with supposing that the blood of Christ was not in itself sufficient in value or in power; it is all one with supposing that the blood of Christ had done the work by halves, and was not adequate to do the whole, but required the help of Purgatory to complete it; it is all one with supposing that Purgatory is capable of perfecting that which Christ could not perfect, and therefore is more efficacious than the blood of Christ!

It will easily be believed that my companion entered most fully into this process of reasoning. He seemed to have received into his whole soul the truth of a perfect and complete atonement and forgiveness in the sacrifice of Christ. And as

verse after verse was read, his eyes would brighten, and his cheek glow, and his countenance smile, while his exclamations, at one time "the precious—precious blood !" at another, "the words are sweeter than music," and again, "that is the blessed—blessed truth,"—all showed that the Holy Scriptures were doing their destined work.

After a time he told me that he had always been taught—adding that it was in the catechism—that when the Scriptures said that the Blessed Lord took away sin and forgave sin, it only meant that He took away or forgave *the guilt* of sin, but that He never took away *the punishment* of sin. And thus, he added, the Church of Rome teaches us that although we have in Jesus the forgiveness of the *guilt* of our sins, yet we have not the forgiveness of *the punishment* that is due to our sins. And that thus, while Jesus takes away *the guilt*, it is Purgatory, and penance, and absolution, and the like, that take away *the punishment*.

I replied to this, by saying, that there was no ground for this in Holy Scripture, nor indeed, I added, in common sense. If true, it would mar the whole Gospel ; for that which a sinner fears is *the punishment* of his sins, and the Gospel would cease to be a Gospel, if it did not bring the glad tidings of salvation from the punishment, as well as from the practice and the guilt of sins. But what is the distinction between the guilt and the punishment of sin ? We shall understand this better by supposing a case. We suppose a traitor has plotted treason against the sovereign ;⁴ his guilt is proved, and the verdict given ; his sentence is pronounced, and he is doomed to die a traitor's death. We further suppose the sovereign holds the prerogative of mercy, and declares the pardon, the free pardon of the traitor. The traitor relents, his heart is filled with gratitude, his eye is flooded with tears of joy, his pardon is sealed, and he expects his liberty and his life. But, when expecting freedom, he finds his chains more closely riveted than before ; when expecting life, he finds himself brought to the scaffold, and the executioner is there, and the ax is there, and the parade of a traitor's death is there. He

demands the freedom and the life his sovereign's pardon had given him. He is answered, that the sovereign remitted *the guilt of his treason*, but did not remit *the punishment of his treason*! Would not the fated man cry out upon such a mockery as this? Would not his severed head find a voice—would not his headless body find a tongue—would not every thing within him cry out in burning reclamation against such a mockery of pardon? And yet this spectral shadow of pardon—this unreal fiction and pretense of a pardon—this cruel mockery is ascribed by the Church of Rome to Jesus Christ; instead of that full and free forgiveness—forgiveness full as the waves of the ocean and free as the winds of heaven, which He has purchased in His blood. “I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and as a cloud thy sins.”—Isaiah xlv. 22. “He will subdue our iniquities, and Thou wilt cast all our sins into the depths of the sea.”—Mic. vii. 19. “I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and iniquities I will remember no more.”—Heb. vi. 12. This is the forgiveness of Heaven. It remits the guilt, it remits the penalty, it annihilates the sin; and any thing short of this, any remitting of *the guilt*, while there was a retaining of *the punishment*, would be as useless and as cruel a mockery of the sinner as it would be unworthy of Him who is the Prince of the kings of the earth.

But, I continued, we have not done with this doctrine. There is no truth in the whole of Revelation more certain than that the sufferings of Jesus Christ are accepted instead of the sufferings that we deserved. He was foreshadowed in all the types of the law, where the sacrificial victim was brought to the altar instead of the transgressor. The victim was accepted in the stead of the transgressor, the victim was slain in the stead of the transgressor, the blood of the victim was accepted for the blood of the transgressor, the death of the victim for the death of the transgressor; the throes, the struggles, the sufferings of the victim were accepted for the throes, the struggles, the sufferings of the transgressor. The whole ceremonial represented a vicarious atonement.

The law demanded the suffering of the transgressor, but the law was satisfied to accept the suffering of the sacrificial victim in his stead. This was the type of Him who is our sacrificial Victim, "the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world." He has been our sacrificial victim; His suffering, His blood, His death, has been accepted as a vicarious atonement for our suffering and blood and death. It is, therefore, the prophet says, "Surely He hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we did esteem Him stricken, smitten of God and afflicted. But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and with His stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way, and the Lord hath laid upon Him the iniquity of us all."—Isa. liii. 4–6. This is the Gospel. And this it is, that, while it comforts and encourages the believer, confounds that fiction which would teach us that Jesus Christ remits the guilt without remitting the punishment of sin.

In all my experience, I have seldom, if ever, seen a more marked or emphatic reception of this cardinal feature of the Gospel. It seemed as if the poor fellow had been gazing upon the sun in its brightness, and his eye was so dazzled and filled with its glories, that even when he looked away, it seemed to be seen in every thing. The several passages of Scripture were like fresh rays of clear and beautiful light streaming in upon the vision. He seemed as if he could never be weary of taking them in, and he made me repeat them again and again, and said he could no longer doubt, but believe, that the death of Christ on the cross was sufficient for all sins, mortal and venial, and for both the guilt and the punishment of sin. If Jesus on the cross has borne our sufferings, surely we shall not have to bear them again.

PURGATORY.—II.

A Conversation to reclaim a Convert—The Interval between Death and the Judgment—The Question as to the Abode of the Dead during that Interval—The Middle Region of Purgatory—Scripture reveals only Heaven and Hell—One Mode of solving this Question as to the Righteous Dead—The non-necessity of the Middle State admitted by the Church of Rome—The Scapularians—Another Solution as to the Ungodly Dead—Five Regions in Purgatory.

I have already narrated a conversation on the subject of Purgatory, with a young man, who was very much in earnest. His earnestness led him at once to abandon the Church of Rome. He became a frequent attendant of our cottage-lectures, and a regular worshiper at our parish church.

A great effort was to be made to reclaim him. Every thing was done and said by friends and neighbors and priests to bring him back to the Church of Rome. He stood firm ; and often, when he was unable to answer their arguments, he used to take his stand on some great and broad truth of the Gospel, and bring the argument to this, as to a test. He explained it to me thus. When they argued for some penance or mortification, and he could not answer as he wished, he called to mind how Christ had endured every thing for him ;—when they argued for the sacrifice of the Mass, and he could not confute them as he could wish, he called to mind that the death of Christ was the only true sacrifice ; when they argued for praying to the Virgin, and he could not answer them as was desirable, he called to mind that Christ was the one Mediator between God and man—and thus, as he told me, he was enabled to fortify his own mind, and repel every argument, even when he could not answer it. He said he *felt* that their arguments were wrong—that their doctrines were wrong—that their practices were wrong—he *felt*, al-

though very often he was unable to prove, that they were wrong.

He stated to me one day that he had been much perplexed with one argument which he could not answer. They had asked him—where are the souls of the dead between the day of death and the day of judgment? They had said that they must be in a third place, which was Purgatory. He felt they were wrong, but he could not answer them. And he stated that a large number of his friends and neighbors proposed coming to me to argue it with me in his presence, for they thought they could convince him thus fully, by my inability to solve the difficulty.

It was soon arranged that they should come to me at my next cottage lecture.

The attendance was very large, as was usual when any thing particular was expected. The majority were Roman Catholics. A small knot or party of these sat together in a corner, and seemed under the leadership of a little man whom I well knew as a controversialist of a very sharp and bitter kind. He was clever; and the confidence of his manner seemed to have an influence over a certain class of the peasantry. I had frequently met him before—had argued with him—and soon found, that if I led him out of the beaten track, out of the common arguments on any point, he was perfectly powerless. He was not a pious man, though a great and warm advocate for the Church of Rome: being in reality more fond of politics than of religion.

When I had concluded my lecture, I said, that I understood that some of the Roman Catholic neighbors wished to ask me some questions about Purgatory, and that I wished to give them the opportunity. I would therefore say, that one objection we entertained against that doctrine is, that it is not revealed in Holy Scripture. We read there of a HEAVEN. We read of a HELL. But we *never* read there of a PURGATORY. It is scarcely possible, I said, to open the Holy Scriptures without finding some allusion either to the Heaven of the saved, or the Hell of the lost. Our Lord has himself frequent-

ly allude to the world beyond the grave, and he always refers to Heaven or to Hell, and describes the one as "eternal life," and the other as "everlasting punishment." He makes no mention whatever of a Purgatory, precisely as if there was no such place in existence. Our Lord says not a word respecting it. The Holy Scriptures reveal nothing about it; whether we read the writings of the prophets—the books of the evangelists—the epistles of the Apostles—the discourses of our Lord—or the preaching of the Apostles, or the visions of Revelation, while we find repeated mention of Heaven and of Hell, we have no allusion whatever to Purgatory. The whole volume assumes the existence of these two regions; but so far as Purgatory is concerned, the Holy Scriptures are as silent as if it never existed—as if the sacred writers had never heard of it.

Our little friend here said that he acknowledged that the Holy Scriptures often mentioned both Heaven and Hell, and that they never mentioned Purgatory by name. But, he said, looking about with confidence, although they do not mention Purgatory by name, they have the thing itself. And it is of no consequence about the name, if the thing itself is there. Now, to show that the thing itself is there, he would appeal to myself whether there was not another place—a third place for the souls of the dead? He would ask me or any Protestant in the world—Where were the souls of the dead between the day of their death and the day of judgment? They were not in Heaven, and they were not in Hell. Where were they—unless in a third place, which the Catholic Church calls Purgatory?

This question was proposed in a manner that showed that he felt the difficulty in his own mind. And it was apparent, from the manner in which it was received, that a clear answer was very necessary. I, therefore, begun by saying, that, even if there was a third region, it would not prove that that region was a Purgatory. Our objection went, not so much against a *third* place, as against a *purging* place—a place supplying another means of purging away sin beside the blood of Christ.

This is our real objection. He at once acknowledged the difference.

I then said that there were two ways of dealing with it. And I asked his careful attention.

I. I have first to ask you, I said, or any Roman Catholic present, where are the souls of the Virgin Mary—of the Apostles and all the saints, from the day of their death to their resurrection? The Pope is constantly canonizing new saints. Where are the souls of St. Dominic and St. Francis—of St. Cecilia and St. Catharine, and of the long catalogue of saints in the Litany? Their bodies are all in their graves; but where are their souls? Where are they?

He said, he supposed they were in heaven.

I then added, asking, whether it was not true, that in the Church of Rome they confess to "all the saints,"—they pray to "all the saints," as if they were in heaven, in the presence of God, and therefore able to intercede and mediate for them. I ask, therefore, as their bodies are in their graves on earth, where are their souls between their death and the day of judgment?

He said again, that the Church taught that they were in heaven.

I replied at once that this proved, on their own showing, that the souls of God's saints, God's holy children, can be removed at once to heaven, while their bodies are in their graves, waiting their resurrection. And all His believing people are His saints or holy ones, loved by Him, redeemed by Christ and sanctified by His Spirit; so their souls may be translated at once to heaven. There is no necessity for their stopping in some middle or third region. They are at once translated, like the Virgin Mary, like the apostles, like all the other saints, to heaven, and there they enjoy as much happiness as disembodied spirits are capable of enjoying.

The effect of this was unmistakable. Natural and simple as it was, it told with wonderful effect. It seemed to pour a new light into the minds of the hearers. They looked one at another. The Protestants seemed extremely amused. A por-

tion of the Roman Catholics seemed to feel it decisive, arguing that the saints, when the Pope canonized them, must be in heaven, or they could not help us; and others evidently were hopelessly perplexed. The little leader himself seemed puzzled, and unable to say a word. I therefore continued to say that—

The souls of God's children, or saints, or believers, as they were variously called in Holy Scripture, were translated to heaven, and there enjoyed as much happiness as disembodied spirits were capable of enjoying. There the souls remained till the resurrection of the great day, when there will be the reunion of the soul and body, and the fullness of happiness is consummated; and on the other hand, the souls of the unrighteous are transferred to hell, and there they endure as much misery as disembodied spirits are capable of enduring, until, by the resurrection at the day of judgment, the reunion of soul and body shall capacitate them for all the fullness of their destined miseries.

This is the answer I have usually given to the question, saying that the souls of the righteous, of the redeemed are there in heaven, where the Romanists themselves say that the souls of the saints reside. On their own showing, there is no necessity for a middle or third region. And undoubtedly there is much in the language of the Holy Scriptures to justify this answer. It is said of the righteous in his death, that "the righteous is taken away from the evil to come; he shall enter into peace; they shall rest in their beds, each one walking in his uprightness."—Isaiah, lvii. 2. Again: "We are always confident, knowing that, while we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord (for we walk by faith, not by sight): we are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord."—2 Cor. v. 6–8. And again: "For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. But if I live in the flesh, this is the fruit of my labor: yet what I shall choose I wot not. For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ, which is far better."—Phil. i. 21–23.

And again: "Here is the patience of the saints: here are

they that keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors: and their works do follow them.”—Rev. xiv. 12, 13. These Scriptures, beyond all doubt or question, imply a state of happiness or blessedness as immediately consequent upon the death of the righteous. They imply that the death of the righteous conducts him to peace and rest—and this is not Purgatory; that it conducts him into the presence of Christ—and this is not Purgatory; that it conducts him into a state better or happier than this life—and this is not Purgatory; that it conducts him to such a state, that it is more desirable to depart than to remain—and this can not be Purgatory; and yet further, we read the words of the Redeemer on the cross to the repentant thief, “This day shalt thou be with me in paradise.”—Matt. xxiii. 43—and this can not be Purgatory, for it is expressly described as the inheritance of the righteous, and the place where is the tree of life.—Rev. ii. 7. All these and countless parallel Scriptures seem to imply that when the righteous die, their souls are taken to their rest, and are in the presence of their Saviour and their God, and enjoy all the happiness of which disembodied spirits are capable, till the resurrection of the last day, when body and soul united shall enter on the full fruition of their destiny of glory. Further than this, I added, the Holy Scriptures do not assert, and therefore, further than this, we ought not to question.

I then asked him whether he was not a Carmelite or Scapularian, and whether there were not others present who belonged to the same religious confraternity?

Several voices responded in the affirmative.

I then opened a little volume which is much circulated among the members of the order; and which contains the privileges and the indulgences belonging to the members. I read the following passage:

“John XXII., Sovereign Pontiff, found himself greatly harassed by a schism which the Emperor Louis IV. wished to

raise in the Church. Once having risen early, according to his custom, to pray, and kneeling devoutly, his mind being somewhat elevated, there appeared to him the glorious Queen of Heaven. She kindly consoled him and promised him her protection and assistance against his enemy, enjoining on him besides, that he should favor, confirm, give efficacy to what she, the Mother of God, had obtained in heaven from her divine Son, Jesus Christ; that he should publish to all the faithful the precious treasure of the Indulgences of the sacred Scapular. And that she herself, as a most loving Mother, would go down into Purgatory every Saturday to free such saints as she should find there, to carry her holy habit, subjoining thereto the obligations which those would be obliged to perform who should wear it, to merit so great and so singular a privilege. The whole is minutely related and confirmed by John XXII. in a Bull. In this Bull the following words spoken by the Virgin Mary to the Pontiff occur. From the day that they, i. e., the Fathers and Brothers of the Order of Mount Carmel, depart from this world and pass into Purgatory, *I, their Mother, will graciously descend on the Saturday next after their death, and I will free every one who I shall find in Purgatory, and I will conduct them to the holy Mount of Eternal Life.***

The reading of all this caused varied feelings among my hearers: some of them laughed, while others, who belonged to the confraternity, exclaimed that it was all as I had read it—that it was in their own books, but they seemed not to divine my object in the citation.

It is a pity, said one of them in an under-voice that

* This Order of Carmelites, or Scapularians, is very numerous in Ireland, embracing all the more religious members of the Church of Rome, among the lower classes. The book from which the foregoing is extracted, was printed in Dublin for the use of the Order in 1826, and purchased by myself at their office. I also have since then purchased it in French, published in Paris, and in 1841 it was published in Italian at Rome. I purchased it there in 1845.—A volume so widely published has some importance.

of the comic—It is a pity to die on any day, barring Friday night, if the Blessed Virgin takes us out on Saturday.

The tone of his voice, and the manner of the man, had its natural effect on a people so susceptible of the ludicrous, and a whole volley of odd things were said, that could only be said in an assembly of Irish peasants.

When I succeeded in quieting them, I asked, whether this belief of the Carmelites or Scapularians did not imply that the members of the order left Purgatory for Heaven, for “eternal joy in paradise,” as is said in one place, and for “the holy Mount of Eternal life,” as is stated in another, and whether this did not prove that their souls can go to heaven before the day of judgment?

This process of reasoning, though perhaps unsatisfactory to some minds, was all-powerful among our hearers on this occasion. Our little friend who was to lead the opposition was himself a Carmelite, and wore the Scapular, and he fell marvelously in the estimation of his supporters.

He was perfectly perplexed. If I had gone on arguing with him in the usual way, he would have proceeded with the usual answer, as contained in their controversial books. But here, having admitted that all the Saints were in Heaven, and that the Carmelites and Scapularians would proceed to Heaven before the day of judgment; his argument failed, on his own showing, as to the necessity of a third or middle state. I felt that this was the moment for another mode of dealing with the subject—one that I have seldom found to fail among Roman Catholics.

II. I addressed the little leader of the party gently, and said that as he had asked me where were the souls of the dead between their death and the day of judgment, and as I had answered him to the best of my power, so now I thought that I might ask him the very same question—Where are the souls of the righteous between their death and the day of judgment?

The whole of our hearers declared that this was fair—that he must answer me.

He answered without hesitation—in a third place—Purgatory.

But, said I, my question refers to the interval between their release from Purgatory and the day of judgment. Where are they after their release from the third place—after their release from Purgatory? In the Catechism of the Council of Trent, it is said that they remain in Purgatory only a “stated time.” And my question is, as to where they are after that stated time is completed?

There was no answer; and the silence had more effect on my hearers than any eloquence.

I then reminded them that they offer masses to relieve the souls in Purgatory—that they purchase masses, and give endowments, and make bequests to release the souls from Purgatory—that convents and friaries and monasteries and churches and cathedrals have been founded and endowed in order to have masses offered to release the souls in Purgatory—that Purgatorian societies are very extensively established, through which, on the payment of certain subscriptions, the souls of friends and relatives are released by masses from Purgatory. Now we ask—what becomes of those souls, for which all these masses are offered, and by which they are released from Purgatory—what becomes of them, and where are they from *the day of their release to the day of judgment*? If they are still in this third place called Purgatory, after all the money that has been paid, then are the monks and friars and priests of Rome, the worst defrauders the world has ever seen; for as defrauding is described as raising money under false pretenses, these men raise money in order by masses to release the souls from Purgatory, whereas, according to this, they are never released at all! But, if they are released from Purgatory, then, I ask, where are they from the day of their *release* to the day of judgment?

I have often seen my opponents amusingly perplexed by this inquiry. They said at first, that the souls were removed to heaven. And when I reminded them of their previous argument, that souls could not enter heaven till after the day

of judgment, they retraced their steps, and told me that these souls were in another region, not of suffering like Purgatory, nor glorious like heaven—a **FOURTH** place!

And thus the difficulty involved in their question to us, entangled themselves far more, for they were obliged to admit, that during the interval they are in some other region—some fourth region—which is not Purgatory, but in which they live in all the happiness of disembodied spirits.

But I have further asked—where are the souls of the wicked, according to their principles, during the interval between the death and the judgment? There is no Purgatory for them; and therefore I asked—where are they during this interval! I have asked this question a hundred times of the advocates of the Church of Rome, and I never yet could obtain an answer. They will not say that they are transferred immediately to hell, without waiting for the resurrection-day; for that would supply us with an argument from analogy, to prove the righteous are in like manner translated immediately to heaven, without waiting for the resurrection-morn. They will not say that they are in Purgatory; for that would imply that the damned are undergoing a purgation for Heaven, and would finally be saved. And if they are neither in Purgatory nor in Hell, where are they? So that, in whatever light we view this question—where are the souls of the dead during the interval between the day of death and the day of judgment? it is certain, that however they had hoped by it to have entangled us, it has entangled themselves in tenfold more inextricable difficulties. If it compels us to suppose (as it does not), in addition to Heaven and Hell, the existence of a third region as a receptacle of the soul from the day of death to the day of judgment, it will compel them to suppose a fourth region as a receptacle of the souls of the righteous from the day of their release from Purgatory to the day of judgment; and additionally to this, a fifth region as a receptacle of the wicked from the day of death to the day of judgment!

In the present conversation, I took care to lead to this,

with the view of setting it before the Roman Catholics present. After therefore I had asked—Where are the souls of the wicked between their death and the day of judgment? and received no reply, I said, that on his own showing, there must be not only a middle or third place, but seven places.

1. I asked him whether, in the Church of Rome, they did not believe in a Purgatory, where the souls of the righteous depart for their purification? This is one region.

2. Again, I asked whether they do not suppose there is then a place where the souls of the righteous depart after the Masses have released them from Purgatory, and where they remain till the day of judgment? This is the *second* region. My opponent at once assented to this.

3. I then asked whether they do not suppose there is next a heaven, whereunto the souls of the righteous enter on the judgment-day? This is the *third* region. They assented to this also.

4. Again, I asked whether they do not further suppose that there is a place for the souls of the wicked, where they remain from the day of death to the day of judgment, different from the Purgatory of the righteous. This is the *fourth* place. This was assented to.

5. And lastly, I have asked whether they do not then suppose there is a Hell, where the wicked are cast after the judgment of the last day. There is the *fifth* region. This was at once acknowledged.

It thus appears, I concluded, that on the principles of the Church of Rome there must not only be three, but *five* regions in the spiritual world, and that, where they had hoped to entangle me they were inextricably entangled themselves; and besides these, the catechism of the Council of Trent describes *two* other places, under the names of *Limbus Patrum*, where rested the souls of the Old Testament worthies, and of *Limbus Infantum*, where rest the souls of little children. We, I added, on our principles, can at once cut the Gordian knot, for we hold that the souls of the righteous are in Heaven, enjoying there all the happiness of which such disembodied

spirits are capable, and waiting there for re-union with their glorified bodies, in order to obtain a capacity for all the flood of glory that awaits them ; and we hold, on the other hand, that the souls of the wicked are in Hell, as was said of Dives in the parable, "in Hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torment," suffering there all that disembodied spirits are capable of, and are reserved there for re-union with their resurrection bodies, in order to the endurance of their destiny of woe.

While stating this argument, especially when specifying the several regions—the *seven* regions instead of Heaven and Hell—there was a play of countenance among the Protestants present, which showed a lively sense of the ludicrous. They felt that the tables were completely turned on our little friend, and that where he thought to have puzzled me by his favorite questions, he was himself inextricably perplexed. The feeling among the Roman Catholics was of more importance—it was a varied one. But I believe that it was universally thought that it had been far better for his cause that our little friend had never asked his question. Among some of them, there was great thoughtfulness and gravity. Among others, there was an appearance of bitterness and disappointment ; while the keen sense of the ludicrous, so characteristic of the peasantry, found vent in some pleasant sallies at his expense.

I saw that my object was well-nigh gained, as much so as I could have anticipated ;—that the partisans of the Church of Rome were silenced, if not convinced ;—and I resolved to improve the occasion by a more useful and profitable mode of dealing with the subject. I therefore changed my manner—asked their serious and calm attention, and then went over the process of argument given in a former conversation, setting forth the power of the blood of Christ for the remission of all our sins, and showing from the Holy Scriptures, that His sufferings and death were the atoning sacrifice for all who believed : and that, therefore, there was no need of the fire of Purgatory. This gave me an opportunity of setting forth the great truths of the Gospel ; and I am bound to say that the

Roman Catholics present listened with reverent attention to those glorious truths. I could not have desired a more attentive or absorbed congregation. And some there were, who seemed at the time completely melted and subdued under the love of Christ.

THE SUPREMACY OF THE CHURCH OF ROME.

The Ideal of the Church of Christ—Of the Church of Rome—The twofold Vicariate temporal over nations, and spiritual over Churches—Her Claim as Mother and Mistress of all Churches—Untrue as a Matter of Fact—Whether St. Peter or Christ be the Rock—Matthew xvi. 18—How this concerns the Roman Church—Whether St. Peter was Bishop of Rome—Whether any Supremacy is secured by this to the Roman Church—Whether St. Peter alone was to feed the Flock—John xxi. 15—The true Head of the Church is Christ—Whether He needs a Vicar on Earth.

THE ideal of the Church of Christ is grand and magnificent. It is this;—that the Lord Jesus Christ has passed away into heaven;—that having ascended into heaven He is there enthroned, first as the King of kings, and so possessing all authority over and above all the kingdoms of earth; and then, as the High Priest of His Church, and so invested with authority over all Churches upon earth;—that, in keeping with both these prerogatives, it was prophesied that the kingdoms of the earth should become the kingdoms of the Lord, and that all people should come and worship before him;—and that the Lord Jesus Christ in the heavens is thus the King of kings and the High Priest—the *King-Priest* of the world.

In all this part of the ideal the Protestant Christian and the Roman Catholic are in accord. It is at the next stage or platform of the splendid edifice that we separate.

The Romanists, in their ideal of the Church, hold that our Lord being in heaven, requires a Deputy or Vicar to represent him, and bear His office on earth; and that He has appointed the Bishop of Rome as His Vicar. It is apparent that, as such, the Vicariate represents not only His office as *High*

Priest, but His office as *King of kings*—not only the *spiritual authority over the Church*, but the *temporal authority over the kingdoms of the earth*.

This is the true ideal of the Church of Rome ;—that the Bishop of Rome, being the Vicar of Christ, possesses the authority of Christ on earth—an authority extending over *the temporal kingdoms* as well as over *the spiritual Churches*. It is true that this Vicariate has of later years been divested of nearly one half of its original, namely, the temporal power of Christ ; but it was universally recognized in the middle ages ; and even long after the Reformation, was recognized among the states still adhering to the Church of Rome. It was in the exercise of this supposed Vicariate of the *temporal* power of Christ, that the Pope deposed sovereigns and appointed kings at his will ; and required of them to raise their armies and carry on wars for the purposes he prescribed. It was in the exercise of this claim that he pronounced the deposition of Henry VIII. and declared his dethronement of Queen Elizabeth. It was in the exercise of this claim he ceded, by a mere grant of his own will, the crown and kingdom of Ireland to Henry II. of England ; and in after times, gave, by a free grant from himself, the crown and realm of England at one time to the King of Spain, and at another time to the King of France ; and that he took the crown and realm of England from King John, and then restored them as gifts from himself. It was in the exercise of this assumed office that the Pope ceded all the East Indies as a possession to the King of Portugal, and in like manner granted all the West Indies as a free gift to the King of Spain. The principle on which these grants were made, and this power claimed is expressly stated in the papal Bulls, namely, “that to the Vicar of Christ and successor to St. Peter, belongs every land on which the Sun of righteousness has shone.”

All this portion, however, of the idea is passed away. While the temporal powers of Europe were petty dukedoms and baronies, ever at war with each other, the Roman Pontiff was able to control them. He freely deposed one and ap-

pointed another, and by absolving the oaths of allegiance in one case, and promising a cession of territory in another, he was able to make his power felt throughout Europe. When, however, these petty states became absorbed into larger and mightier kingdoms, the sovereigns became conscious of their powers, and gradually shook off this temporal authority of the Popes, and the result has been, that universally this assumption of being the Vicar of Christ in His office as King of kings, has been denied and rejected by every state in Europe. The temporal scepter has thus passed from the Pontifical hand.

The Church of Rome, therefore, now comes before us speaking no longer of her temporal Vicariate, but only of her spiritual Vicariate, and proclaims herself *the mother and mistress of all Churches*.

The following are the words of her Creed, "I acknowledge the Holy Catholic and Apostolic Roman Church, *the mother and mistress of all CHURCHES*, and I promise and swear true obedience to the Bishop of Rome, the successor of St. Peter, Prince of the Apostles, and *Vicar of Jesus Christ*."

When reasoning on this article of her creed, I have stated that this was a question of fact—not a question of remote research or abstract reasoning or refined learning, but simply a question of fact, and must be determined as all other questions of fact. I have therefore asked—Is it a fact that the Church of Rome is the *mother Church of Christendom*? It is evident from the Holy Scriptures, that the Church of Jerusalem, not the Church of Rome, is the mother of all Churches—that our Lord commenced His Church at Jerusalem—that He commanded His disciples to go through the cities of Judah alone to preach His Gospel, and lay the foundations of His Church—that He specially directed His apostles to remain at Jerusalem, until the Holy Ghost should descend upon them, and give them power; and accordingly they there waited till the power came, and they were enabled to preach, and "the Lord added to THE CHURCH them that should be saved"—that thus the Gospel was first preached, and the Church first formed at Jerusalem; and so, when the apostles went every where found-

ing the churches, they returned to Jerusalem to consult as to the controversies that arose—that this Church of Jerusalem was thus the first Church—was *that* from which all the others have sprung, and so she is the mother Church of all Christendom; and therefore it is not a fact, but a clear and certain untruth, that the Church of Rome is the mother of all churches. The apostle Peter first opened the Gospel and founded the Church of Jerusalem; if afterward he founded the Church of Rome, then on their own showing, it is—painful and strong as the word may be—a *known and positive falsehood on the face of her creed*, to say the Church of Rome is “**THE MOTHER OF ALL CHURCHES.**”

To this when I have conversed with Roman Catholics, they have never made a reply beyond the suggestion, that there was probably some other and different meaning for the phrase, when the article was determined.

I have answered this, by saying, we must interpret the language of the creed in its simplest and obvious sense—that the article did not pause with this untruth, but proceeded with another, namely, that the Church of Rome is “**THE MISTRESS of all churches;**” if by this language it is meant to convey that she ought to be, or that she wishes to be mistress of all churches, it is intelligible, though not very modest. As the article at present stands, it is untrue. It is untrue as a simple question of fact. She is *not* the mistress of all churches. She is *not* the mistress of the English, the American, the Swedish, the Dutch, the Danish, the Prussian, the Greek, the Russian the Asiatic Churches. The majority, the numerical majority of the professing Christians of the world reject and deny her authority. The Eastern Churches, the Greek Churches, the Protestant Churches deny her authority. They all hold their own independence, and reject the pretensions on her part to authority over them. They reject with one voice her pretended Vicariate of Jesus Christ. It is therefore *a broad and plain untruth inserted as an article of the creed of the Church of Rome!*

To this it is sometimes answered that she does not regard

these as churches at all—that they are out of the pale of Christendom ; and that she speaks in her creed only of those who are in communion with herself, and who can only be regarded by her as true churches ; and that all she intends in the article of her creed is that she is a mother and a mistress, not of all the churches, but only of those which are in communion with her.

I replied, that evidently this was not the intention of her creed. Her object was that at a time, when so many national churches, as Germany, Sweden, Holland, Switzerland, England, broke away from her authority, she might still assert her authority over them, claiming, as she still does, authority over all baptized persons as her subjects. This was apparently her object, as it is involved in the supposed supremacy of Saint Peter, and of the popes, his supposed successors.

It is here the advocates of Rome think themselves able to take their stand. Forced from every other ground of argument on which they would urge her claim as the mother and mistress of all churches, and driven back bewildered and broken, by the charge of inserting two plain and admitted untruths in her creed, they invariably fall back upon the assertion of the supremacy of St. Peter, and the popes his supposed successors.

In my intercourse with Roman Catholics there was no question so frequently discussed, and none on which at first they had such unbounded confidence, as this question of the supremacy of St. Peter, and of the Church of Rome.

In justification of this assertion, they adduce one Scripture. The whole superstructure of Roman supremacy with all the claims and assumptions dependent on it, is erected on that one Scripture ; and therefore seeing that it has to support on its single shoulder the whole Atlas of Romanism, it ought assuredly to be clear—strong—decisive. When, however, we examine this we find that it does not advance them one hair's breadth in the argument ; and that they might as well hope to suspend the Vatican in the air by a spider's web, as

hope to support the superstructure of Romanism on such a passage as this.

The words are in Matt. xvi. 13 :—"When Jesus came into the coasts of Cesarea Philippi, He asked His disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I, the Son of Man, am? And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets. He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but My Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build My Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Their argument on these words is, that our Lord here constituted St. Peter as the rock or foundation of the Church of Christ—that St. Peter was the founder and first Bishop of the Church of Rome—and that he granted the privileges of the Church of Christ to the Church of Rome forever.

This argument, it is apparent, consists of three distinct parts or propositions. It is a chain consisting of three links. On this chain the whole system of Roman supremacy and Roman authority is suspended. It well behooves these links to be strong, when they are to support so vast a burden. The slightest defect or weakness in any one would be the destruction of all.

No one has been much in conversation with Romanists without being often reminded of this Scripture, as if they never thought it capable of any other interpretation; and as if surprised at any question being raised respecting it. They seem really and honestly to believe that it is sufficient to justify all the claims of the Church of Rome.

I have asked my friends to state logically, or at least precisely, the nature of their argument from it.

It was accordingly said that Jesus Christ—before returning to heaven—appointed Peter as the rock upon whom His Church was to be built;—that therefore the Church of which

Peter was bishop, must be alone the Church of Jesus Christ—that this Church was the Church of Rome.

I said in reply, that this argument involved several propositions, each of which was questionable in itself, and I suggested our examining them *seriatim*.

I. The first proposition—the first link in the chain—was that our Lord appointed that the Church should be built on Peter as on a rock, according to the words, “Thou art Peter—and upon this rock I will build my Church, etc.”

I said that I questioned this statement altogether—I said our Lord Jesus Christ was *himself* the rock upon which His Church was built, and that it was a palpable misinterpretation of this Scripture to suppose it was Peter. I then argued as follows.

Our Lord Jesus Christ is frequently described in Old Testament Scriptures under the figure of a rock or a stone. On the one hand He is called “the Stone laid in Zion”—Isa. xxviii. 16, and the “Corner-stone,” and the “Stone of stumbling.” On the other hand He is called “the Rock of Salvation,” and “the Rock of our strength,” and “our strong Rock.” Both these terms are applied to Him in a vast variety of places, and are designed to point out to us that the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God, is the foundation of our hope and the ground of our salvation. It is in this spirit that David says, “the Lord is my Rock and my Fortress and Deliverer; the God of my Rock, in Him will I trust.” And again, “Who is God save the Lord? and who is a Rock save our God?” And, again, “The Lord liveth, and blessed be my Rock, and exalted be the God of the Rock of my salvation”—2 Sam. xxii. 32–47. And in the same way Moses sings, “Ascribe ye greatness unto our God; He is the Rock, His work is perfect, and all His ways are judgment.”—Deut. xxxii. 4.

Such a use of these terms, pointing to Jesus as the solid and firm foundation of His Church and people, occurring so frequently in the Old Testament, prepares us for a similar use of them in the New Testament Scriptures. Accordingly our

bleſſed Lord uſes the following language! “Jeſus ſaith unto them, Did ye never read in the Scriptures, The ſtone which the builders rejected, the ſame is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord’s doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes!” This was ſpoken of Himſelf, who, under the figure of the ſon in the parable, was rejected by the husbandmen, and was to be avenged upon thoſe who thus acted. And thus our Lord applies this term to Himſelf. St. Paul gives it the ſame application, “Ye are built upon the foundation of the apoſtles and prophets, Jeſus Chriſt Himſelf being the chief corner-ſtone; in whom all the building, fitly framed together, groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord.”—Eph. ii. 20. This Scripture ſhows the full force of the term, as applied to Chriſt, implying that He was the “rock,” which forms the foundation of His Church; as the apoſtle ſays in another place, “as a wiſe maſter-builder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jeſus Chriſt.”—1 Cor. iii. 10, 11.

It is not eaſy to conceive how ſuch plain Scriptures ſhould not be deemed adequate to prove Jeſus Chriſt to be the Stone or “Rock,” which forms the foundation of the Church. There is ſcarcely a place in all the Scriptures, that does not aſſiſt in illuſtrating that great truth. And yet it is held in the Church of Rome, that St. Peter, and not Chriſt, is the “Rock.” It is happy, however, that we have St. Peter’s own judgment upon this; from which we learn that ſo far from claiming this honor to himſelf, he aſcribes it altogether to Chriſt. The Scripture to which I refer, is as follows:—“Wherefore, alſo, it is contained in the Scripture, Behold I lay in Sion a chief corner-ſtone, elect, precious; and he that believeth on Him, ſhall not be confounded. Unto you therefore, which believe, He is precious; but unto them which be diſobedient, the ſtone which the builders diſallowed, the ſame is made the head of the corner, and a ſtone of ſtumbling, and a rock of offense, even to them which ſtumble at the word, being diſ-

bedient.”—1 Pet. ii. 6–8. In these words, the Apostle Peter cites two predictions. One is—“Therefore thus saith the Lord God, Behold I lay in Zion for a foundation, a Stone, a tried stone, a precious corner-stone, a sure foundation ; he that believeth shall not make haste.”—Isa. xxviii. 16. This Scripture is expressly applied by St. Peter to the Lord Jesus Christ ; thus giving to us his sanction for saying, that Christ is the “Foundation” and “Stone.” The other is—“He shall be for a sanctuary ; but for a stone of stumbling, and for a rock of offense.”—Isa. viii. 14. This Scripture is also expressly applied by St. Peter to the Lord ; thus giving his authority for believing the Lord Jesus Christ is indeed the “Stone” and the “Rock” of which the Holy Scriptures speak.

This is a point of some interest ; for the whole argument of the Church of Rome depends on the position that St. Peter, and not Christ, is the “Stone” or “Rock” upon which the Church is built. Now here we have the express judgment of St. Peter on this very point ; for here he himself plainly ascribes it to the Lord Jesus Christ. This enables us to deal with that only Scripture, to which the advocates of Rome refer.—“When Jesus came into the coasts of Cesarea Philippi, He asked His disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I, the Son of Man, am ? And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist ; some, Elias ; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets. He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am ? And Simon Peter answered and said, THOU ART THE CHRIST, THE SON OF THE LIVING GOD. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona ; for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but My Father which is in Heaven. And I say also unto thee, that thou art Peter, and UPON THIS ROCK I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.”—Matt. xvi. 13–18.

In these words we find St. Peter making a true confession : —“THOU ART THE CHRIST, THE SON OF THE LIVING GOD.” These words are the key to the whole passage. This great and glorious truth is the foundation of all Christianity. If this be true, then all is true. If this be false, then all is false.

This is the great fundamental truth—the truth firm as “the Rock of ages”—the truth upon which the whole Church of Christ is built. It is, that Jesus is “the Christ, the Son of the living God.” When, therefore, the apostle had uttered this great truth—when he had spoken this true confession, our Lord arrests his words, and says, “Upon *this* Rock”—upon *this* truth which is firm as a rock—upon this fact, that I am the Messiah, the Son of the living God—upon *this* which the Spirit of God hath revealed to you—“upon *this* Rock I will build My Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.” This—this is the true purport of the words of our Lord ; not making St. Peter the “rock,” but making Himself—making His own Messiahship—His own Sonship to the living God as the great foundation of His Church.

To take any other view of this Scripture, is to strike at the very foundation of the Church. It is clear that the apostles never understood them as ceding a supremacy to Peter, for immediately afterward, chap. xviii. verse 1, we find them disputing which of them was to be the greatest ! This dispute could never have arisen, if the apostles had believed that our Lord’s words conferred supremacy on Peter. The thing would have been impossible. And to interpret it with the advocates of the Church of Rome, would be against the words themselves. Our Lord’s words are—“Thou art Peter, and upon *this* rock I will build My Church.” The word “*this*” must clearly refer to the great truth, which had thus been spoken, and could not possibly refer to St. Peter ; for as our Lord was speaking to that apostle, He could not have used the word “*this*” but “*thee*,” saying thou art Peter, and upon *thee* do I build my Church.” But he says nothing of the kind. And as for that which the Romanists allege, namely, that the name of Peter is expressive of a stone, and that our Lord, caught with the allusion and playing on the name, said, “Thou art Peter” (that is, a stone), “and on this rock I will build My Church”—it is only accusing our Lord of a poor and miserable pun upon the apostle’s name ; and that at the mo-

ment when he was pointing to the one and only foundation of His Church.

I have found that this exposition of this Scripture is new to many Romanists, and I have known several who at once received it as far preferable to their own. Many a mind candid and sincere, has unhesitatingly adopted it, and thus has been led to the first step of their withdrawal from the Church of Rome. This exposition is common enough among us, and we think it very strange that any other should be adopted, but it must always be remembered that the Romanists are not generally very conversant with the Scriptures, and have habitually heard of Peter as the rock, and therefore our exposition of the words comes with all the appearance of novelty to their minds.

I have of course been very careful to show that this removes altogether the foundation on which rests all the claims of the Church of Rome ; for if one link in the chain of her argument be that Peter was the rock, and if it be proved thus that Peter was not the rock, the whole system at once falls to the ground. If the Vatican be suspended from heaven by a chain of three links, and that this is one of them, and that this has failed, the result is inevitable.

But there are many Romanists who have contested with me this interpretation. I can not say that they have ever advanced any thing beyond some play upon the name Peter, signifying cephas or a stone. And when arguing with such persons I have pressed on them—and indeed they generally admit it—that it *may* be considered questionable and uncertain which is the true meaning—that it is thus a very doubtful and uncertain text upon which good and learned men may fairly differ—that the Fathers of the primitive Church differed as widely as ourselves ; and when they have admitted this, I have pressed on them the inference that thus after all, on their own admission, all the claims of the Church of Rome rest on a Scripture of doubtful and uncertain meaning—one on which good and learned men may and have differed!—a strange foundation for such high claims as supremacy and infallibility.

II. I have then recalled the attention of my friends to the second proposition—to that which was the second link in the chain—to the statement that it was Peter who founded the Church of Rome, and who was the first bishop or Pope of that Church.

I argued that the proof of this proposition is absolutely necessary to the argument of the Church of Rome. That necessity will be apparent thus. Supposing that for argument's sake, we admit that St. Peter was the "rock,"—supposing this, we yet ask, How would that admission prove the supremacy of the Church of Rome? How would it prove, that the Bishop of Rome had supremacy over the Bishop of London, any more than that the Bishop of London had supremacy over the Bishop of Rome? How would it prove, that the Church of Italy had authority over the Church of England, any more than the Church of England had authority over the Church of Italy? In this Scripture there is no mention either of Pope or of Bishop, of Rome or of London, of Italy or of England. And therefore I ask, supposing we admit, that Peter was the "rock," how that admission would prove the supremacy and authority of the Church of Rome over the other Churches of Christendom?

They freely admitted in reply to this, that their argument required that Peter should have been the founder of the Church of Rome, or at least have been the Bishop of Rome. And that therefore, the claim of supremacy and authority, on the part of Rome is dependent on that fact—a fact, which they said, was as certain as any other in history.

I replied that my own faith rested exclusively on the Holy Scriptures—that the statements of history in general might be true or otherwise, and my belief or disbelief of such statements did not affect the salvation of my soul—that the statements of Holy Scripture were a matter of faith with me, and therefore I asked whether, in so essential an article of faith as that Peter was Bishop of Rome, there was any warrant whatever in the Holy Scriptures.

The reply was a frank acknowledgment that there was noth-

ing in the Holy Scriptures to prove it—that as to Peter having been Bishop of Rome, or even as to his having ever been at Rome, the Holy Scriptures are silent. They said they were dependent for it altogether on the tradition of history.

I stated that this made an article of faith dependent upon the testimony of fallible historians! I added, that I denied altogether the statement as a matter of history. I said that that was not the occasion to enter on the historical examination, but that I would any time undertake to make good, two broad and strong positions. *First*, that there is extant no writer for two hundred years after the death of Christ, who has asserted that Peter was the bishop of Rome—and *second*, that the later writers, who mention it, derived it from no adequate authority, but repeated it one after another, all deriving it from an unauthorized statement and from a mistake as to the meaning of preceding writers. These two propositions I am able to maintain. But at present, my argument is connected with the Scriptures.

I reminded my friend that he acknowledged that in the Scriptures there was no evidence whatever, that Peter had been Bishop of Rome, or even had ever been at Rome in his life. I then added, that there was strong evidence, the strongest possible evidence of a presumptive kind, tending to prove the contrary.

I proceeded to state the argument thus.

In the first place, we read that it was St. Paul who preached the Gospel at Rome. He was taken to that city a prisoner. His arrival is detailed in the last chapters of the Acts of the Apostles. He found some Christians there, his preaching to them is related, and then it is added—“Paul dwelt *two whole years* in his own hired house, and received all that came in unto him, preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, with all confidence no man forbidding him.”—Acts xxviii. 30, 31. We thus learn that it was Paul and not Peter, who collected a Church at Rome.

In the second place, we read that St. Paul was appointed as the apostle of the Gentiles, as St. Peter was the apostle of the Jews. We read this in Galatians, ii. 7: "They saw that the Gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me, as the Gospel of the circumcision was unto Peter. For He that wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision, the same was mighty in me toward the Gentiles." St. Paul was therefore the appointed apostle to the Romans as being a Gentile people. We have evidence in the Scriptures that he fulfilled his office among them; we have no evidence that St. Peter ever visited them in his life.

In the third place, St. Paul wrote an epistle to the Church at Rome, and in the last chapter he sends his salutation to all the principal of the Christians there. He specially mentions twenty-eight persons, but sends no salutation to St. Peter—makes no allusion whatever to him—pays him no respect; and certainly if St. Peter was then at Rome, and especially if he was the Bishop or Pope of Rome, an apostle like St. Paul could scarcely have failed to send his salutation, or at least make some allusion to him, in an epistle written to the Church at Rome.

In the fourth place, Paul, when residing at Rome, wrote his epistle to the Colossians. In that epistle, he makes mention of those Christians at Rome, who assisted him in the preaching of the Gospel, and comforted him in his troubles, when imprisoned by the rulers. After mentioning Tychicus and Onesimus, he adds, "and Jesus, which is called Justus, who are of the circumcision: these *only* are my fellow-workers unto the kingdom of God, which have been a comfort unto me. Epaphras, who is one of you, a servant of Christ, saluteth you, always laboring fervently for you in prayers."—Col. iv. 11. These alone—these were the only Christians that had courage to stand by him; so that we may conclude that either St. Peter shrank from the cause of persecuted Christianity, or that he was not the Bishop of Rome in the time of St. Paul.

In the first place, the apostle Paul, while residing at Rome, wrote his second epistle to Timothy. In that epistle he alludes

to his trial at Rome before the imperial authorities; and he says the Christians were so frightened that they forsook him: "At my first answer no man stood by me, but all men forsook me; I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge."—2 Tim. iv. 16. Thus all forsook him in the hour of peril; and therefore either St. Peter was not then Bishop at Rome, or he failed in faithfulness, and abandoned the apostle in the hour of need.

Here, I remarked, are five distinct evidences, and others of a similar nature might be added, which taken separately have each their own weight, and when taken altogether constitute a very grave argument against the assertion that Peter founded the Church of Rome, and was the first of its bishops.

The answer to this was one for which I was prepared, as being so common among the members of the Church of Rome, namely, that these Scriptures did indeed prove that Peter was not at Rome during the time that Paul was there; that they also prove satisfactorily that Peter was not at Rome when Paul wrote his epistle to the Romans; that all these Scriptures therefore prove, not that Peter did not found that Church, nor that he never was bishop there, but only that he was not there at any time of which we have evidence in the sacred Scripture. And that in the absence of Scripture we have the evidence of history to support the assertion.

I replied that this admission was amply sufficient for my argument, namely, that at no time alluded in the Holy Scriptures was Peter at Rome—that at no time of which we possess divine evidence was he in that city—that consequently, if his episcopacy there is to be believed, it must be, not on divine authority, but only on the uncertain evidence of ordinary historians—that by consequence this fundamental principle of Romanism, this fundamental article of the Roman creed, was based on fallible, not infallible writers! I then reminded him of what I had previously stated, namely, that all these fallible writers received their statement from one, only one originally—that they merely repeat his statement, and that they did not do even this till some two centuries after the death of our

Lord. And thus a second link in the chain of this argument is defective.

III. But I reminded my friend that his argument on the place in Matt. xvi. required him to make good another particular—a third link in the chain. It was that Peter—supposing him to have been the rock, supreme and authoritative over all—did impart that supremacy to the bishops who succeeded him in the see of Rome. Ordinarily speaking it might be supposed that the authority and supremacy would have passed naturally to the surviving apostles, as for example to the apostle John. It could scarcely be believed that it could have passed to Linus, or Anacletus, or Clement, or whosoever is to be supposed to have succeeded, and that this person, of whose name all writers are uncertain, assumed supremacy and authority over all the surviving apostles, and especially of the beloved disciple—St. John.

No answer was made to this. It was merely stated that the facts were so.

I then pressed the point at which I was aiming. I said that I would for argument's sake suppose that Peter founded the Church of Rome and was the first bishop of that see; but I saw not how that admission could benefit my opponent, inasmuch as all history testified that Peter founded the Church of Antioch, and was the first bishop of that see. The first see was that of Antioch; the second was that of Rome, and all the writers of the Church of Rome acknowledge that Peter was Bishop of Antioch for some years before he was Bishop of Rome. The question arises therefore as to which of these two Churches, the elder Antioch or the younger Rome, has rightfully inherited his supposed supremacy and authority.

I state the argument thus.—The apostle Peter founded the Church of Antioch; we read in the Scriptures that he was at Antioch; it is acknowledged by the Romanists that he was Bishop of Antioch for some years; this fact being undisputed, we argue, that if St. Peter was the “rock” on which the Church of Christ was built, then the Church of Antioch has as much claim as the Church of Rome to all the prerogatives

of Peter. If the fact of St. Peter having been Bishop of Rome insures the infallibility and supremacy of Rome, then will the fact of St. Peter having been Bishop of Antioch insure the infallibility and supremacy of Antioch. The plea is as good for one as for the other ; if it holds valid for Rome, it must hold valid for Antioch ; and if it be invalid for Antioch, it must be invalid for Rome.

My friend could give no solution of this difficulty. He confessed that he saw and felt it, but could not account for it ; but that he would make the inquiry of those more competent than himself, and tell me the result. He was true to his word, and I learned shortly afterward the explanation he received. It was, that God, by express revelation, commanded St. Peter to resign the bishopric of Antioch, and to accept the bishopric of Rome ; and that the exchange having been effected, St. Peter bequeathed by will the headship of the Church, with all the privileges of authority and supremacy, to the Church of Rome !

It seems strange that thinking men should be content with such an answer as this—A REVELATION from God translating Peter from the see of Antioch to the see of Rome, and A WILL from Peter, bequeathing his supremacy and authority to the successors in the see of Rome !

They have no other answer than this—they have no other link than this to complete the chain ! We tell them there never was such a revelation. We tell them there never was such a will. And yet, upon this wild and foolish fiction, the whole privilege of the headship of the Church, the mother and mistress of all Churches—the authority of the Pope—the supremacy of the Church—is asserted to exist in the Church of Rome in preference to the Church of Antioch. On this wild and foolish fiction they claim for the Bishop of Rome, as the chief Bishop of the Church of Christ, and for the Church of Rome, as “the mother and mistress of all churches,” an authority over the Church of England !

We will never yield ourselves to this *claim*. Even if they could produce a revelation from God, commanding St. Peter to remove his see from Antioch to Rome, it could only prove

he had lawful authority *at Rome*; it could not prove he had lawful authority in *England*. Even if they could produce the pretended will of St. Peter, devising authority and supremacy to Rome, we must deny his right to make such a bequest. We should argue that even if he possessed authority and supremacy himself, he could no more devise them than the Queen of England could devise her crown, or than the Archbishop of Canterbury could devise his see. The Queen of England has only a life-interest in the crown; she can not devise it. The Archbishop of Canterbury has only a life-interest in his see; he can not devise it. And, in the same way, St. Peter had only a life-interest in his supposed authority and supremacy; he could not devise it. If ever there was a headship of the Church in St. Peter, then, when he died, it either died with him, or it must have lapsed to St. Paul, or St. James, or St. John, or to some one of the apostles. It is not possible it could have descended to any inferior person, that *he* should have a headship over the apostles of our Lord. So that if even there was such a revelation and such a will, it might prove St. Peter had authority in Rome, but it could not prove that he had authority in England.

And now to review our argument. The claim of the Bishop of Rome to the headship of the Church of Christ, and his subsequent claim of authority over our Church and realm of England, depends or hangs suspended, as it were, on a chain consisting of three links. The first is, that St. Peter was the rock on which the whole Church was built. The second is, that he placed the Church at Rome, and then connected himself with that see. The third is, that he bequeathed his infallible authority from his eldest daughter of Antioch to his younger daughter of Rome. It is evident, that if any one of these three links be defective, and much more if all of them are defective, the Vatican is too vast a burden for them, and the whole must fall and be broken in pieces. The more this chain of argument is examined, the more assured will every thinking man become of the utter vanity and futility of the Romish claims. It would not be more vain or futile to dream of sus-

pending the dome of St. Paul's Cathedral on a spider's web, or Windsor Castle on a gossamer thread, than to suspend the claims of the Papacy upon a support so frail and slender as this.

And yet this is the whole force of their argument, as founded on that place in Matthew xvi. It is the sheet-anchor to which their advocates hold when all else seems swept away, and every thing seems the shattered fragments of a wreck; they therefore cling to it as with the grasp of death. Often, however, have I seen them, after many a long and vigorous and desperate struggle, at last relax their hold, and, with weeping eye and heaving breast, let it be swept away with all the useless lumber that had long been connected with it. And then all was new. It was indeed a change, great, boundless, wonderful. It was as if they had been plunged amid the raging surges—had felt a death-struggle—had seen glimpses of another world, and had now at last opened the eye on a scene of peace and rest and joy. One had spoken the words, "Peace, be still," and there was a great calm. It was the change from the uncertainty of Romanism to the realities of Christianity!

While arguing on this subject, my friend, on one occasion, objected to my regarding the passage in Matthew as the only place that taught the supremacy of Peter. He referred to John xxi. 15. He remarked on this, that our Lord's people or Church were His flock of "sheep" and of "lambs;"—that they, the old and the young, were alike committed to Peter, and not to the other apostles; and he therefore inferred that our Lord constituted him as the Chief Shepherd of souls, as His Vicar or Chief Shepherd upon earth.

In reply to this, I expressed the pain that every good man must feel at the fact, that Scriptures like this should ever become a field of controversy. They were designed for the use and profit and improvement of souls, showing their need of constant watching and tending, and also showing the real duty of the ministry of the Church as the shepherds of the flock. I added, that the allusion in the present instance was a

painful one, and militated against Peter. He had denied our Lord—he had done so three times—he had done so with every aggravation, even with cursing and oaths; and he was probably regarded, at least there was danger of his being regarded by the other Apostles, as having fallen from his apostleship. They knew that Judas had so fallen. Peter himself knew this and states this. (Acts, i. 20.) His mind and their mind required to be satisfied. And our Lord, therefore, addressed Peter in this remarkable way to set all this at rest. Peter had denied Him *three times*. And in allusion to this our Lord commits to him *three times* the office which he had justly forfeited, that of being one of the shepherds of His flock. And thus, I argued, that these words can in no sense be construed into an appointment of Peter as the head of the Church and Vicar of Christ. They were designed rather to humble him, as reminding him of his fall.

My friend was not satisfied altogether with this, and added, that our Lord must have intended something more than this. We never read of any other persons being desired to feed the sheep and the lambs of Christ; He used such language only to Peter.

I told him that the same language was applied in Holy Scripture to all the ministers of the Church; that they all, as well as Peter, were addressed as shepherds of the flock of Jesus Christ, the Great Shepherd of the sheep; that Paul so addresses them: "Take heed, therefore, unto yourselves, and to all the flock over which the Holy Ghost has made you overseers, to feed the Church of God, which he has purchased with his own blood."—Acts, xx. 28. Such was the language of Paul; and that of Peter himself is similar: "The elders who are among you, I exhort, who am also an elder—feed the flock."—1 Peter, v. 1. This language shows that all the ministry of the Church are the shepherds of the flock of Christ; and, therefore, that there is nothing extraordinary in the application of the same language by our Lord to Peter.

My friend made no further remark on this subject, so I took occasion to say that I never could see why the advocates of

the Church of Rome were so anxious to magnify Peter above the other Apostles. I could never see how they could benefit their position by such means ; for, even supposing they could prove that Apostle to be the prince of the apostles, I could not see how that fact, if indeed a fact, could give reality to any fiction, or effect to any assumption, or truth to any error, that might exist in the Church of Rome. I stated freely, that I did not want to press the argument, that of all the Apostles Peter seemed the least fitted for supremacy ; he reproved our Lord for speaking of his coming sufferings ; he refused to be washed by the hands of our Lord ; he proposed on the Mount of Transfiguration to make a tabernacle for Moses and Elias, as if on an equality with Christ, as the evangelist simply remarks : " not knowing what he said ;" he denied our Lord under the most base circumstances, with cursing and oaths ; he was openly withstood to the face by Paul, because he had dissembled and was to be blamed as not walking uprightly. He seems thus the least likely to have been selected to be the prince of the apostles ; the more especially as on two occasions, Luke ix. 46 and xxii. 24, we read of some disputes among them as to who was to be the greatest. Now as the much-boasted passage supposed to have conferred this chiefship on Peter occurs in Matt. xvi., and as the dispute among them, as to who was to be the greatest, occurred immediately afterward, in Matt. xviii., so it must be inferred that the question was not settled by our Lord's words in Matt. xvi. ; or otherwise the dispute could never have arisen. And besides this, our Lord would at once have silenced it by reminding them that he had already appointed Peter over them, if indeed he had appointed him. But instead of this, as if nothing of the kind had ever occurred, he puts a child in the midst, and proceeds to tell them that no one was to be their chief, for that all were to be equal as brethren.

There was no effort to reply to this ; so I said, that even if we granted a supremacy or a primacy to St. Peter, I could not see how it improved the position of the Church of Rome, so far as her claims were concerned. The great point between

us was, whether certain doctrines and practices, which we held to be untrue and novel, contrary to Holy Scripture and different from the primitive Church, were or were not the true doctrines and practices of Christ's Church. I could never see how any question respecting Peter could determine this. Let him be supposed to have held any position whatever in the days of our Lord and of His Apostles, that fact, supposing it to be a fact, could not be a justification of any error of doctrine or of practice which had afterward crept into the Church of Rome. *His ancient primacy* could not give truth to *any modern error*.

My friend, who had been silent, as if doubtful how to reply, now said, that if Peter was the head of the Church, it might fairly be inferred that the Church of Rome has inherited that headship over the whole Church, so as to be entitled to the obedience of all other Churches.

I said that I could not for a moment recognize any head of the Church but one—the Lord Jesus Christ. He, and only He, is in the Holy Scriptures, styled the Head of the Church. “He hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the *Head* over all things to the Church.”—Eph. i. 22. Again, “Christ is the *Head* of the Church.”—Eph. v. 23. Again, “He is the *Head* of the body, the Church.”—Col. i. 18. Again in Col. ii. 19. And again, “that we may grow up into Him in all things who is the *Head*, even Christ.”—Eph. iv. 15. The language of Holy Scripture is clear on this subject, and we can not without irreverence speak of any other as Head of the Church. It is a grand element of truth as received among us, that there can be no Head but Jesus Christ.

My friend seemed fully aware of this principle. He did not seem so well aware that the Holy Scriptures had so frequently spoken only of Christ as the Head. He therefore said, that admitting that Jesus Christ was the Head over the Church, yet as He was in Heaven, He required a Head for His Church on earth, and that thus the successors of Peter in the See of Rome claimed to be his vicars on earth.

I said that the fact of Jesus Christ having ascended into

Heaven, did not prove any necessity for a vicar or deputy on earth, inasmuch as he was ever present by His Holy Spirit, ruling all things in the Church. The Holy Spirit was the One who rules in his stead. And as to the argument that Christ had ascended into Heaven—that he was no more in the Church on earth—and that he therefore required a vicar in his place, I said that it seemed to me a strange position for a Romanist, who believed that He was literally, truly, substantially in flesh, and blood, and soul, and divinity, on every altar, and at all times in her churches. If indeed He is thus always present, it can not be supposed He wants a vicar to represent Him.

This way of stating the question struck my friend as new, and he saw no way of getting out of it. And, therefore, without attempting to answer it, he only said carelessly, that with so many Churches in the world, it was desirable to have one to rule over them all, as the one head bishop of all upon earth. It would serve to promote and establish unity and uniformity among all.

I was fully prepared for this point, for I had heard it urged a thousand times. I said that my friend knew that there were many kingdoms, and empires, and republics in the world. They were all under their own particular laws and rulers; and there seemed no necessity or even advantage, but quite the contrary, in their having One Chief Sovereign who was to be head over all other sovereigns, with the view of establishing one set of laws and principles among them. It was, undoubtedly, better for mankind that each state should be governed by itself, all being under the headship of Him who is the King of kings, and Lord of lords. And in like manner, there are many national Churches under their own laws and rulers. And there is no more necessity for their being all subjected to one head on earth, than that all the civil states of the world should be subjected to one sovereign over all. Wisdom would seem to teach that all states should be ruled by themselves, all being alike under the Headship of Christ, and that in like manner all Churches should be regulated by themselves, all being alike under the Headship of Christ. The Churches

require a Head upon earth no more than the states. They both have their Head in the heavens, and he can rule both without any special vicar upon earth. If he can rule the kingdoms and empires of the earth without any supreme vicar over all, He can as fully rule all the national Churches of the earth without any supreme vicar over all.

INFALLIBILITY OF THE CHURCH.

The two Modes of testing Infallibility—The Value of this Privilege—It is claimed by all Churches—The Romanists place it in Councils and Popes—Protestants have it in the Holy Scriptures—The Systems compared—A living and speaking Infallibility does not exist in any Church—Romish Arguments for Infallibility examined—Its supposed Necessity and Usefulness—Texts of Scripture—Argument in common with the Jewish Church—Its Infallibility more easily provable than that of the Romish Church—General Councils, their Constitutions and Inconsistencies.

IN reference to the claim of infallibility, on the part of the Church of Rome, there is a wide difference in the process of argument, as handled by her advocates, and as handled by her opponents. They always assume that their Church is infallible, and thence conclude that whatever she teaches is right—whatever its appearances, it is right. We, on the other hand, argue, that, that which the law condemns is wrong, and thence we conclude that she is not infallible. With them the assumed infallibility justifies and sanctions the thing that seems to us to be wrong. With us the thing being wrong, proves that the Church is not infallible.

An illustration—and the more simple the better—will elucidate this difference of reasoning. If a man has been detected in the act of thieving, and has been charged with dishonesty and crime, there are two modes of reasoning on his case. On one hand he may admit the fact, that he has robbed, but he may argue that the act was neither dishonest nor criminal, because that he was an honest and lawful man, who would never have done that which was dishonest or criminal. He thus admits the fact, but justifies it on the ground that it is done by one who can not do wrong, and whose very doing it justifies and sanctions it. His accuser, on the other

hand, proves the fact, and argues that thieving or robbing is contrary to the law, a breach of the written law. And being a dishonest and criminal act, the man who is guilty, must be held to be dishonest and criminal. This illustration explains the different process of reasoning of the advocates of the rival Churches. The Romanist argues that Latin prayers, half-communion, prayers to saints, worship of Mary, use of images, etc., are all wise, and right, and good, because they have been done by an infallible Church. However wrong, mischievous, dangerous, unscriptural they may seem, they ought to be held wise, and good, and right, because sanctioned by an infallible Church. The Protestant, on the other hand, argues that these practices are contrary to the law, the written law of God, as contained in Holy Scriptures (as contrary as thieving and robbery is to the written law of the land), and, therefore, the fact that the Church of Rome has ordained, and practiced, and taught these, proves that she is an erring and guilty Church, instead of being, as she assumes, an infallible one. Thus the Church of Rome tries her actions by her claim to infallibility, and we try her claim to infallibility by her actions, thus trying her as we try the professing Christian, that is, we test his profession of Christianity by his actions, not his actions by his profession. We judge the tree by its fruit, not the fruit by the tree.

The natural course, which common sense and just dealing will justify, and which is analogous to all our dealings in human life, is to test the character of the Church of Rome by her actions—to test her orthodoxy by her doctrines, and her infallibility by her practices. It is therefore that every proof of the unscriptural and antiscritptural nature of her peculiar doctrines and practices—every proof of their being inconsistent with or contrary to the *lex scripta*, the written law of God, is a proof against the assumed infallibility of the Church of Rome. It is precisely with that Church as with every man. If we have proved him to have spoken words which the law of the land condemn as rebellious or treasonable, or, if we have proved him to have done an action which the written law of

the land condemns as illegal and criminal, he is at once condemned. And so, if we have proved that the Church of Rome has taught doctrines contrary to the written word of God, or that she has inculcated practices opposed to the written law of God—if we have proved that she has ordained that which is unscriptural or anti-scriptural, she must be condemned. This is the judgment of all common sense and right justice alike.*

But, as the advocates of the Church of Rome insist on assuming her to be infallible and as justifying every thing in the virtue of her assumed infallibility, we may follow them, and impeach her claim to infallibility without reference to her actions at all. The following conversation, in which I was once engaged with a very good and zealous priest of the Church of Rome, will illustrate this.

He spoke in a tone that showed he felt what he was saying. when he expatiated upon the value of an infallible authority. He reminded me that naturally we were all in the deepest darkness and ignorance as to the spiritual and eternal world—that we naturally knew nothing about heaven or hell—about God, or Christ, or the Spirit, or the Virgin Mary, or the angels, or the saints, or even our own souls—that all the mythologies of the heathen world, the Egyptian, the Greek, the Hindoo, and many others only showed what poor and blind guides were the wisest of men—that the great thing, therefore, that was wanted by us, was an infallible guide, a teacher, so to speak, inspired by God himself—and that this was to be found only in the bosom of that Church which was infallible.

I replied in the same tone of earnestness, feeling the reality

* Some of her advocates argue that though these acts seem contrary to the written law of God, yet they are not contrary to the unwritten law—though seeming contrary to the Scriptures, they are not contrary to tradition. They distinguish thus, as between the *statute* law and the *common* law of England; and they forget that the common law, that is, the unwritten law of England, must always yield to the statute or written law. It should be the same in the Church.

of what I was saying. I stated clearly and strongly how fully I agreed with him as to the value and necessity for an infallible authority. And I dwelt on the intense ignorance and darkness—a darkness which, like that of Egypt, could be felt—of man when left in his natural state, urging that he knew not whence he came, where he was, or whither he was going, and that there was a necessity—an absolute necessity—for an infallible authority, a God-inspired authority, to teach him with certainty the way of life. I added that thus far we were both in perfect accord. The point where we differed, was as to the place, where we could find it. We looked for it in different directions.

He said at once with confidence, apparently enchanted at my admission, that it was in the Church of Rome—that no other Church could pretend to the claim, and in fact that no other Church had ever claimed it.

I replied that all the Churches of Christendom—that the Church of England, the Church of Scotland, the Lutheran Church, all the Nonconformist Churches claimed it alike. There was not one of them with which I was acquainted that did not claim the full possession, not indeed the exclusive, but the full possession of this infallibility. **THEY ALL POSSESSED THE HOLY SCRIPTURES!** They all received them, “not as *the word of man*, but as they are in truth, *the word of God*.” They knew that “All Scripture was given *by inspiration of God*,” and they felt that those Scriptures were, therefore, infallible, were an infallible guide, an infallible teacher, and, possessing this, they claimed to possess and did possess infallibility, the infallibility that was so valuable and necessary.

My friend was evidently taken by surprise at this. It seemed never to have occurred to him before; so I took occasion to add that, where he had described the natural ignorance of man, here was the God-inspired guide to teach him—that where he had painted the deep darkness of man in his state of nature, here was the infallible authority that could enlighten and direct him, and that could tell him all that man can know, as being all God has revealed, respecting Heaven and

Hell, and God and Christ and the Spirit, and also all we ought to know or think respecting the angels, or the saints, or our own souls. The only true infallibility, which the Church on earth possesses, is in the HOLY SCRIPTURES. And this INFALLIBLE GUIDE all the Protestant Churches possess !

He did not see how he could answer this. He hesitated, and after a few moments said that he admitted the Holy Scriptures to be inspired and therefore infallible, and that possessing them, we of course possessed AN INFALLIBLE GUIDE. But the real difficulty was not the Scriptures, but the interpretation of the Scriptures, and the advantage of the Church of Rome was, that she had an infallible interpreter of the Scriptures, while others had only their own fallible interpretation of private judgment.

I was prepared for this answer, and rejoined at once by asking him where I was to find the infallible interpreter of Scripture in the Church of Rome.

He said, without a moment's hesitation, that it was in the voice of the Church of Rome ; that if I really wished to see it, I could see it recorded in the canons and decrees of the general councils, and in the bulls of the popes—that these contained the infallible voice, and interpretation of the Scriptures.

I reminded him in reply, that some of the Church of Rome, as the French, held that the infallibility was in the general councils rather than in the popes—that others of them, as the Italians, insist that the infallibility resides in the popes rather than in the councils—and that other authorities still, as the English, teach that the infallibility is in neither the councils nor the popes, but in the whole aggregate of the whole Church, represented by the union of both popes and councils. I reminded my friend that it was not easy for me to find the precise locality where I could discover the infallible interpreter of Scripture. Each party seemed to me to prove clearly that his opponent was wrong, but to argue very feebly when endeavoring to prove that his own position was right, and therefore, I asked again, where among these discordant opinions,

could I find that infallible interpreter which he admitted to be so essential.

It was at once apparent that he felt the difficulty of his position; he said that such difference of opinion was wholly unimportant—that however the Italians might differ from the French, and both from the English, yet they all agreed that the Church was infallible, and that was the main point. They agreed in that which was essential, and they differed only in that which was non-essential.

I apologized for seeming to be persevering. The question, I said, was not whether there was infallibility in the Church of Rome, but *where* was I to find in her the infallible interpreter of Scripture which he stated to be so essential. He had merely stated that it was *somewhere*, but omitted to say *where*, and I felt that the infallible interpreter was to be found *nowhere*—if as one party, the French, stated it was not in the popes, and if another party, as the Italians, asserted it was not in the councils, and if a further party, as the English, held it was not to be found in either the one or the other, we were left practically to the position of those who could not find it any where, as if it really had no actual existence any where. I therefore, pressed him kindly to direct me where I should positively, or at least probably, find this infallible interpreter.

He evidently knew not precisely what reply to make to my natural inquiry; but he said that the disputes in the Church of Rome, as to the seat of infallibility, were quite unimportant, so long as the existence of the infallibility *somewhere* within her was admitted; and he assured me that I had only to study *the canons and the councils and the bulls of the popes*, and I should soon find the infallible interpreter.

This placed the whole argument in my hands; I therefore said, that on his own showing, the difference between the Roman infallibility and the Protestant infallibility was this—the *Roman infallibility* was said to be in THE CANONS AND BULLS OF POPES, while the *Protestant infallibility* was in THE HOLY SCRIPTURES; the question therefore was, which of these two was the most useful, convenient, available. The Roman

infallibility was comprised in a large and vast series of ponderous volumes, to be found only in the libraries of the universities, and of public institutions, requiring a whole life to read them, and a fortune to purchase them. The Protestant infallibility, on the other hand, was in one small and compact volume, to be found in every family, and so cheap as to be accessible to all, and easily perused by all. Again, the Roman infallibility was contained in canons and bulls, written originally in Greek and in Latin, and never translated into our modern languages, and therefore wholly inaccessible and useless to the great multitude of the Christian family. The Protestant infallibility on the other hand, is found in the Holy Scriptures, which, though originally written in Hebrew and Greek, have been translated and circulated in every language, and thus have become accessible and intelligible to all the family of Christ. And, although my friend had stated that the Holy Scriptures were subject to this objection, that they required to be translated—that they required their authenticity to be proved—that they required their inspiration to be demonstrated—that they required to be interpreted, as otherwise they were liable to be misinterpreted and differently interpreted by different persons; so the very same objections applied to the canons of councils and bulls of popes, for that they required also to be translated—they required also their authenticity to be proved—they required also their inspiration to be demonstrated—they required also to be interpreted, as otherwise they were liable to be misinterpreted and differently interpreted by different persons. There was not a single objection advanced against the Holy Scriptures, the infallible guide of the Protestant Churches, which does not apply still more strongly against the canons and bulls which are the infallible guide of the Roman Churches. And there is this one important consideration—one of immense and solemn importance on such a subject. Our guide, the Holy Scriptures, is admitted by Rome herself to be GOD-INSPIRED, AND THEREFORE INFALLIBLE. There is no question on that point, *that* infallibility is admitted by all; while, on the other hand, her guide, the

councils and the popes, are not only not recognized or believed by us to be God-inspired or infallible, but the very reverse; they are uninspired and fallible.

We were thus brought to a pause in our argument. We had agreed as to the value and necessity for some infallible authority to teach and enlighten us in the things of the invisible world. We had agreed that it ought to be easily accessible, available and intelligible to the people. The point whereon we were not agreed, was that my friend on the part of the Church of Rome said that this infallible authority was the Holy Spirit, inspiring THE CANONS OF COUNCILS, AND BULLS OF POPES, while I maintained that it was the Holy Spirit, inspiring THE HOLY SCRIPTURES. This, therefore, brought the question concerning infallibility to a short issue. It enabled me to place it in a simple and clear light. It enabled me to place the volumes of councils and bulls on one side, and the Holy Scriptures on the other—to place the twenty or thirty ponderous volumes of the former on one side, and the one portable volume of the Bible on the other—to look at the untranslated and almost untranslatable Greek and Latin of the former on one hand, and on the plain and simple translation into English of the latter on the other hand—to look at the former, so large, cumbrous, expensive, on one side, and to look at the latter, so small, convenient, and cheap, on the other side—and having marked the contrast, we were in some condition to see which was the most convenient, accessible, and available for the multitude, who constituted the children of God and family of Christ.

My friend saw that the question was thus narrowing; and he likewise saw with clearness the difficulty of his position—the difficulty in which he was brought by this process of reasoning, but he did not see with equal clearness any mode by which he could extricate himself. He made, however, the best answer he could, when he said that in an authority in spiritual things, such as that which we were seeking, there were other requisites besides probability and cheapness and availableness. These, he said, were very desirable, perhaps—but they were

not all. The grand requisite was, that the authority should be INFALLIBLE, and that it should be UNIVERSALLY RECOGNIZED AS INFALLIBLE.

To this I of course yielded my assent; and taking advantage of his words, I reminded him that THAT was the grand recommendation of the Holy Scriptures as well as the great defect of the canons and bulls. It was the grand recommendation of THE HOLY SCRIPTURES that their divine inspiration and infallibility is universally recognized, by Protestant and Romanist and Greek alike, while it is one great defect of THE COUNCILS AND BULLS OF POPES that their divine inspiration or infallibility is not only not recognized, but absolutely rejected and denied by the majority of professing Christendom!

He then said that the Holy Scriptures, considered as the infallible authority in the Church, were liable to a further objection which he had not yet stated. It was that they were now silent, and could not speak so as to decide on any question that had been raised for some centuries. It could not in fact be a living and speaking infallibility.

I said that it was scarcely necessary to remind him that the canons of councils and bulls of popes are in that respect in the very same predicament as the Holy Scriptures. They are no more *living* and *speaking* than the Holy Scriptures. If one be objected to because it is merely a book or volume, then the very same objection will lie against the other; for the canons of councils and the bulls of popes are only a series of volumes—a dead, lifeless, non-speaking series of books or volumes. And any other exists not in the Church of Rome; for since the Council of Trent in 1562, there has never been a Council. For three hundred years this infallible authority has been in abeyance, and in silence, and must be so to the end of time. Whatever possibilities ever existed before the Reformation, for the assembling of a universal or general council of Christendom, it is now impossible. And, therefore, if the living and speaking infallibility be in the canons of councils, approved by the bulls of popes, then not only has it been three centuries in silence and abeyance, but it is in such a position

that, like the long-buried dead, it can not rise again till the judgment of the last day. And, I added, that the conduct of all their advocates proved this, for they never refer us to any *living and speaking* authority. They refer us always to some past council—some long past councils of which the very latest met and separated three centuries ago, and referring us to these, and not to any living and speaking infallibility, they practically show that they have no faith themselves in the existence of such.

I ask you then, I said in conclusion, who or what or where is the living and speaking infallibility, to which you refer as so unspeakably valuable and essential? You invite me to submit to it, you beseech me to come to it. Who, and what and where is it? I mean this *living and speaking* infallibility—who, and what and where is it?

My friend made no attempt to answer this. Long since this conversation was held, I have been answered at Rome that the Pope was this living and speaking infallibility, but my friend did not believe the popes to be infallible. He held that the infallibility was in the general councils approved by popes, and he therefore knew not where to turn to find a living and speaking infallibility in reply to my inquiry.

But the question concerning infallibility is wide and large. It will bear handling in a great variety of ways. And I have usually left myself to be guided by the line adopted by my opponents.

On one occasion, when conversing with a priest who seemed to me a good and pious man according to his light, we had been speaking on some great truths, on which we were not likely to differ, when he broke out with a warm and rapturous address on the comforts and blessedness and value of infallibility—the infallibility of the Church. It gave, he said, such peace and quiet assurance to the mind; so that a Christian man was not “tossed to and fro with every wind.” It was such a satisfaction to know that one was on an immovable rock, and that in all we were to believe or to do, we had the sanction of the infallibility of the Church. He added,

that to his mind the possession of infallibility was the greatest and most blessed of the privileges or prerogatives of the Church.

I replied, that I could understand an infallibility **IN THE HOLY SCRIPTURES**, but that I could not understand it in any other way **IN THE CHURCH**.

He said that it was impossible for any man, amid the innumerable divisions of the times, the endless distractions of the professing Church, the variety of sects and parties, the multiplicity of opinions, to have any peace or quiet assurance of mind, unless by reposing on the infallible authority of the Church—that men of the most astute intellect, and the deepest and most profound genius, were unable often to determine between the arguments of opposing parties—that men learned in all historical research and ecclesiastical lore, felt themselves often like some ship, made the sport of the winds and the waves, without pilot or compass to guide them; that men of gentle spirits and meek and lowly piety were agitated and distracted by the contentions, the contradictions, the arguments of rival sects, till it seemed to them that religion was for contention and not for peace; that in the midst of all this, men could see no star to guide, no compass to direct, unless they consented to surrender their own private judgments, and submit all their doubts and difficulties, to the infallible authority of the Church.

I said that I could quite enter into and understand all this, provided it was first proved that this infallible authority did really exist in the Church of Rome. I said that my difficulty was not in yielding to an infallibility; for I yielded all to the infallible authority of the Holy Scriptures; but that my real difficulty was in believing that there was some infallible authority in the Church of Rome, other and beside the Holy Scriptures.

He spoke to me with warmth and earnestness, and instead of noticing my difficulty—instead of proving the existence of this infallible tribunal, he expatiated on the sad and melancholy divisions of the Church. On one hand was the Greek

Church with all the Asiatic Churches, separated from the communion of the one Catholic Church. On the other hand was the Protestant Church with its endless variety of sects, cut off from the pale of the one Catholic Church; and in these distractions there could be no peace for any man, till he once resolved to silence his own doubting, unbelieving temper, and submitted himself to the infallible authority of the Church. He said he could well understand the state of my mind, and would not for the world exchange for it his own quiet and undoubting faith in the Church. If a subtle argument was subjected to him and he could not answer it, he felt it must be wrong, as being opposed by infallibility—if a doubting feeling passed for a moment across his mind as to any Catholic truth, it was at once silenced by resting on infallibility. And as to all the sects and parties into which we were divided, as to all the opinions that were discussed and debated among us, they were at once disposed of by an appeal to infallibility; and he added that I could never have quiet of heart, or peace of mind, until I had unreservedly flung from me every previous opinion, and every judgment of my own, so as to accept unreservedly and with implicit faith, the judgment of the Church of Rome.

I replied to all this in an earnest and affectionate tone; I felt he was sincere; I therefore stated that I had been in the habit of regarding the Holy Scriptures as infallible, as being the Word of God, especially as it was expressly said that "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God," and that I conceived that all the advantages which he imagined in connection with *the infallibility of the Church of Rome*, were enjoyed by myself in connection with *this infallibility of the Holy Scriptures*. Having stated this, and having with all warmth of heart portrayed to him the preciousness of the Word of God to the soul—the light that shone from its pages, the comforts that were in its promises, the blessedness that it portrayed, the love of Christ that it exhibited, the fullness for our salvation which characterized it—having stated all this, and pressed on him the peace and joy and blessed-

ness he would find in the study of it; promising that he would realize as David did, that the Word was "sweeter than honey and the honeycomb"—having stated all this, I concluded by reminding him that the difficulty on my mind was, that he had never shown me that there was any infallible tribunal, other or beside this, in the Church of Rome. There could be no doubt or hesitation in at once submitting to it, if once its existence were proved. I therefore asked him to prove to me the existence of this other infallible tribunal beside the Holy Scriptures; and I pressed on him that as he had urged me to have recourse to it, he was bound at least to prove to me its existence.

He said that it was scarcely necessary to undertake to prove that which was universally admitted, namely, that there was in the Church an infallible authority. It was proved by the necessity for its existence. The Church could not go on without it. There could be no unity without it. All would be private judgment, and division, and distraction without it. All peace, and order, and certainty would vanish away without it. And the Church would necessarily become a field of contention instead of peace, and a scene of division instead of unity, if such an infallible authority did not exist, to restrain, silence, certify on all things. There is thus a necessity of the highest kind for the existence of this infallible authority; and we thus prove it by this necessity for its existence. Without it there would be endless inconvenience. With it there are incalculable advantages.

I replied that all this seemed to me to prove only that *authority* was desirable—an *authority* which could influence the mind and calm the contentions of men; but that it did not prove the existence of an *infallible authority*, which was the point before us. I said that an example would illustrate this. In the civil state an authority was necessary to restrain the wicked, and there must, therefore, be an authority in the law, and an authority in the executive, or the whole social state—the whole fabric of civil society—would crumble in ruin. That authority suppresses treason, rebellion, murder, robbery,

and all crimes against the well-being of society, and there is a necessity for this; but there is no necessity for infallible laws and an infallible authority in the civil power for this. There is need for *authority* in the civil sovereign, but no need of *infallible authority*; and in like manner, though his argument went to prove the need of *authority* in the Church, it showed no need of *infallible authority*.

He saw this, and acknowledged it, but he added, that it would be of immense advantage that the authority in the Church should be infallible, as by being infallible it silenced not only the contentions and divisions and controversies of men, but silenced also the very doubts, as they arose in the minds of men. He argued, therefore, that the great importance and value of the thing, the convenience of having an infallible tribunal, was a presumptive argument to prove the existence of the thing. Look, he said, at the state of your Protestant Churches. They are divided and torn asunder, the very soldiers that crucified the Blessed Saviour would not rend his garment, but cast lots for it, rather than tear it, but the Protestants, worse than these Pagans, tear the precious garment, the Church of Christ, into fragments! It is not too much to say that between the Church of England and Scotland, Episcopalian and Presbyterian, and Methodist, and Baptist, and Independent, and Moravian, and Irvingites, and Mormonites, and others, there are above a hundred different sects and parties, and yet they all appeal to the Holy Scriptures, they all acknowledge the Scriptures as their infallible authority—their infallible rule of faith, but in their interpretation of it, all their divisions arise. Now in this state of things, there is evidence of the necessity or at least the immense importance of an infallible tribunal to judge between them, to heal their divisions and bring all these discordant elements so as to mold them into harmony. It is like the necessity for omnipotence to bring order out of chaos at creation. And this affords strong ground for the belief that such an infallible authority really exists. And again, when reading the Scriptures it is impossible to avoid seeing that they are “hard to be understood.”

Indeed an apostle expressly says they are so, and looking at the multiplicity of interpretation, which have been put on each passage, so contrary one to another, it is not possible to feel otherwise than wishing for an infallible authority to decide for us.

I replied by saying that I could readily admit that to allay strife and contention—to put an end to the endless divisions of the Church—and to quiet doubting minds, and settle every disputed tenet, would be very desirable, and if an infallible authority, other and beside the Holy Scriptures, could be found to do this, it would be very desirable indeed; but I said, the defect of his whole reasoning was his supposing that to wish for it, was a proof that we had it, or that our thinking it desirable, was any real proof that it existed. The desirableness of any thing is no proof that the thing exists. The convenience—the supposed convenience—of a thing, is no evidence that it really exists. It may seem very convenient and desirable, that all pain and disease and sorrow should be banished from our nature—that at least an *elixir vitae* that could effectually heal them all, should be revealed to our science. It may seem to be convenient, and desirable that the fountain of youth and life, in which mortals had only to bathe and become young again, and immortal on earth, should be not a fable but a reality, and that the Styx might still be available, in which we might plunge and become invulnerable. It may seem marvelously desirable that all doubts and difficulties and mental conflicts should be shut out from the people of God, that all divisions and distractions should be prevented in the Church, rather than they should first be permitted, and then that an infallible tribunal should be required to remedy them, it being more desirable and convenient to prevent the evil than to remedy it. It may seem desirable and convenient to exclude all possibility of sin by making each one of us infallible in himself—having an infallible judgment in himself, and so needing no appeal elsewhere. It may seem desirable and convenient that there should be no death after life, and no hell after death, for the punishment of the lost. These and a thousand things,

as infallible kings as well as infallible bishops—infallible magistrates as well as infallible priests—infallible parliaments of statesmen as well as infallible councils of churches. These and a thousand things may seem desirable and convenient, but this is no proof that they really exist; and our present question is not as to the *desirableness* or *convenience* of infallible authority, our question is as to the *reality* and *existence* of such an authority. Have you, I asked, have you a proof of the reality and existence of such an infallible tribunal in your Church?

He was evidently conscious that he had failed thus far, and that he must advance something more definite and logical on a point of so much importance. He said, after a pause, that it was impossible to suppose that God would have left the Church without such an infallible tribunal, such a tribunal as could settle every contention, breathe calm into every soul, still and speak peace to every ruffled spirit, and give assurance and safety to all. He was a God of love, whose love for his people was infinite. He was a God of mercy whose compassion rested upon all His poor, weak and suffering people, and it was impossible to have a just sense of His loving and merciful nature, and suppose He could have left us without such an infallible authority as seemed so useful, salutary, and necessary.

I answered this by saying that it seemed to me irreverent toward God to say that he ought to have given us any thing—that it was illogical to argue that he must have given it to us because we think it desirable or convenient. We ought never to argue as to what God *ought* to have done, or what God *could* have done. We ought only to argue as to what God *has* done.

And I endeavored to illustrate the fallacy of such process of reasoning, by saying, it might seem to us only consistent with the mercy and love of our merciful and loving God, to invest us with an infallible judgment ourselves, so as to be able to protect ourselves from error—it might seem only consistent with the mercy and love of our merciful and loving God to remove sin so far from us, in fact to remove it from our

world, so as to spare us from the possibility of temptation or of sin—it might seem too, only consistent with the love and mercy of our loving and merciful God to close the abyss of Hell, and thus seal up forever the mouth of that destroying gulf, that so none might ever perish within its torments and its horrors. But, I argued, that however all this might seem only consistent with the love and mercy of God, we knew by plain and universal experience, that there is a fallacy in all such reasoning; for we know, by melancholy experience, that we have a liability to temptation and sin and death, and that we have not an infallible judgment. I said that all such reasoning was not only illogical but irreverent.

He seemed to feel this; and when I perseveringly pressed him to advance some other argument or evidence as to the existence of an infallible authority in the Church of Rome, he was compelled to confess that he was not prepared with other proofs—that he had thought these sufficient. It remained, therefore, only for me to press on him that he ought not to peril his soul's health and salvation on what he supposed to be an infallible authority, when he was unable to prove the reality of such an infallibility; and all the more when these were the Holy Scriptures—the God-inspired volume—which were necessarily infallible, and which he admitted to be infallible.

Our conversation ended here.

It will here be observed that in this method of reasoning on the subject of infallibility there has been no argument from the Holy Scriptures—no passage, no promise, appealed to, as justifying the Church of Rome in a claim to infallibility. There are indeed certain texts—two in number—which are appealed to by the unlearned, but seldom by the learned. One is that place where our Lord says—"The gates of Hell shall not prevail against my Church," and the other, where He promised to His apostles—"Lo! I am with you always, even to the end of the world."

The first is in Matt. xvi. 18. Our Lord states that He would build His Church upon a rock, and adds—"The gates of Hell shall not prevail against it." The word "Hell" in

the original, is "Hades," the term usually applied to express the grave or death—the invisible world. As when Jacob says, his gray hairs would be brought down in sorrow to *the grave*. This word is the same; and when it is said of our Lord, that he was not to be left in Hell to see corruption, it plainly alludes to the resurrection of His body, which was not to be left in *the grave* so long as to become corrupted. "The gates of Hell," therefore simply means "the gates of the grave," in other words, it is a figurative expression of the power of death; and our Lord means that death or the grave shall never prevail against His Church—that it shall never cease, shall never die—shall live and last forever.

This is the true promise of our Lord to His Church, a promise of perpetuity, a promise of immortality. And it is just like the promise of final safety and preservation to His faithful people. He says—"They shall be mine in that day when I gather up my jewels." He says—"I will raise them up at the last day." He says—"I will receive them unto myself, that where I am there they may be also." He says all this as to the final result—"They shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand," but in saying this He does not promise that they shall never through life fall into any error, or into any sin—in saying this He does not promise that they shall be infallible, but only that they shall be brought through their errors and their sins, brought through repentance and faith, to their final salvation. And so is the promise respecting His Church. It shall never cease, but shall live and last forever. It is invested with perpetuity and clothed with immortality. It is not that no sin and no error shall ever reach it. It is not that infallibility shall be her privilege, but that death and the grave shall never prevail against her.

The second text is in Matt. xxviii. 20. Our Lord desires His apostles to go forth and preach the Gospel to the world; and for their comfort and encouragement, He promises to be with them to the end—"Lo, I am with you always to the end of the world." This was evidently a promise to sustain

them amid the troubles, sorrows, difficulties, disappointments, and persecutions which they were destined to suffer. And it implies that He by His Spirit would be with them to sustain and keep them. And that for the encouragement and comfort of all that, like them, are sent forth to preach the same gospel through all after ages, He has graciously added that He would be with them to the end of the world.

But this does not imply infallibility. Indeed it was after that that Peter fell into his error, noticed in Gal. ii. 11, where "he was to be blamed," as having "dissembled" and "walked not uprightly *according to the truth of the gospel.*" It, therefore, could not have implied personal infallibility to him, either in conduct or in teaching, and much less to any individual person of later times. The words, however, can not imply infallibility, for the very same promise was made to all Christian persons: "when two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst." And yet no one would think of inferring that every prayerful assembly of two or three Christians is infallible; and yet, if the promise to be with the apostles implies an infallibility either against sin or error, then the promise to be with all prayerful Christians who assemble in the name of Christ, will involve an infallibility against sin and error, and so all Protestant assemblies for worship would be as entitled to this privilege of infallibility as those of the Church of Rome. The simple truth is, that the promise of our Lord is not a promise of infallibility, but a gracious and loving promise to all who preach His gospel, that whatever be their trials, difficulties and dangers, He will be with them to sustain and comfort and bless them.

But, as has been already stated, these texts are seldom cited unless by the unlearned; at least, such has been my experience. When conversing with the learned of the Church of Rome, I have found them speak of the promises to the Church as a whole. They seemed to take them in the mass, so to speak, and to argue that they seemed to imply some wonderful privilege, like exemption from error, in other words, like infallibility.

On one occasion of this kind, I replied, that whatever were the words of promise to the Church of the New Testament, as seeming to imply a privilege of this nature, the words of promise to the Church of the Old Testament, to the Jewish priesthood, seemed to involve still loftier privileges. Every text, I said, cited in the New Testament, that tended to imply authority or infallibility to the Church of the New Testament, was eclipsed far away by stronger and clearer texts of the Old Testament, that seemed to imply more fully and certainly the authority and infallibility of the Church of the Old Testament; and, I argued, that if the texts usually cited, prove the infallibility of the Christian Church, much more will the texts of the Old Testament prove the infallibility of the Jewish Church. All these cited by the Romanists are far more than paralleled and over-balanced in force and clearness by those which might be cited by Jews in favor of the infallibility of the Jewish Church. For example—it is said of the Jewish priests that they were to be the teachers of the statutes of the Lord, Lev. x. 11;—that they were to teach Jacob the law and Israel the judgment of the Lord, Deut. xxxiii. 10;—that they were to keep knowledge, and that the people were to seek the law at the mouths of the priests, for that they were the messengers of the Lord of Hosts, Mal. ii. 7;—that in every controversy, in every matter too hard for the judgment of the people they were to come to the priests, who should determine the matter, and who were specially named and appointed to judge and decide in all controversies, Deut. xvii. 3. 2 Chron. xix. 8;—that “they shall teach my people the difference between the holy and profane, etc., and in controversy shall they stand in judgment,” Ezek. xlv. 24; and “by their word shall every controversy and every stroke be tried.”—Deut. xxi. 5. All this is language in reference to the Jewish priesthood far stronger than any language cited in reference to the Christian ministry. All this is language implying far more power, authority, judgment, as the privilege of the Jewish Church, than is implied in any passage cited as applicable to the Christian Church, and therefore, if the feebler and weaker texts cited by

Romanists, will prove the infallibility of the Roman Church, then will those stronger and clearer texts prove the infallibility of the Jewish Church.

This argument becomes stronger still when we consider the wonderful promises made to the Jewish Church and Jewish priesthood, to the effect that God himself would dwell in the midst of them, and bless them, and keep them—that He was there by his special presence in the Holy of Holies—that he had constituted them to be a Sanhedrim or council to judge all causes and controversies in Jerusalem—that he had given in the midst of them a standing oracle, the Urim and Thummim which they could at all times consult—When we consider that God had given such great privileges, and promised such vast blessings to the Jewish Church, we can not but feel on contrasting them with the few feeble texts cited by Romanists in behalf of their Church, that if these latter, weak and feeble as they are, involve an infallibility, thus much more will those stronger and clearer texts prove the infallibility of the Jewish Church. How triumphantly would the Romanists boast, if they could, like the Jews, cite passages to prove specially that their priests were appointed by God to determine every hard matter and decide every controversy—if they could, like the Jews, cite the statement that their priests were specially named as having the law, and that the people were to seek it at their lips—if they could, like the Jews, prove that they had the shekinah of the divine presence in the Church of St. Peter, and the Urim and Thummim in the Vatican of their popes—if they could, like the Jews, find clear evidence that the seventy cardinals constituted a divinely appointed sanhedrin or council for the determining every controversy! If indeed the advocates of the Church of Rome could do this, they might seem to be doing something, they might seem to be proving their claim to infallibility, and yet, after all it would be only *seeming* to do so, for it would be only placing themselves on a level with that Jewish Church which was any thing but infallible, which was charged by God himself with apostasy, rebel-

lion, idolatry, and which in the end rejected His Son Jesus Christ!

This argument I pressed strongly and in much detail on my opponent, as an answer to all the feeble texts which he was classing together, as implying or involving infallibility for the Roman Church.

He replied—as I had anticipated—with the statement, that as the texts cited by him involved the infallibility of the Christian Church, so the texts cited by me implied the infallibility of the Jewish Church; that he believed and held, and all the ablest divines of Rome believed and held, that the Jewish Church was infallible—that the texts cited proved it. And he added that his argument was, that when God had invested the Jewish Church with such infallibility, how much more may we infer that he has also invested the Christian Church with equal privileges, and, especially, infallibility. “My argument,” he said, “assumes the infallibility of the Jewish Church, and on that I found the conclusion in behalf of the infallibility of the Christian Church.”

In reply to this, which is a favorite argument with modern Romanists, I reminded him that the Jewish Church could not have been infallible, for every form of open and secret idolatry was committed by the Jews in the days of Ahab and his successors—that the promises of God upon which the claim of infallibility was based, were promises made to the whole house of Israel, and could not imply infallibility, for no less than ten of the tribes fell off and worshiped the calves of Dan and Bethel—that besides the sin of idolatry, they are charged by God himself with apostasy, leaving him for Baal and Ashteroth and the gods of the heathen, worshiping in the groves and high places, and under the green trees, giving even their children to Moloch—that they had so utterly fallen from God that he gave them into the hands of their enemies, and the temple was burned, and the sacred vessels carried away, and Jerusalem destroyed, and the people sent into captivity—that after all this, when he sent His Son Jesus Christ, the long-promised and long-expected Messiah, the very sanhedrim,

priests, people, all rejected, crucified, and killed him. The whole history of the Jews, from their call to their dispersion, proves that the Jewish Church was not infallible.

My friend answered that their rejection of Jesus Christ only proved that they were not *then* infallible. Jesus Christ was *then* present, and in him the infallibility resided, and when he was among them, it was He, and not they, who possessed the infallibility.

I said that I was aware of that view, as it was urged by Bossuet in his conference with Claude—that it was sufficiently ingenious, but that it failed in this, that my argument referred to the preceding rebellions, idolatries and apostasies with which God himself, in all his prophets, arraigns the Jewish Church. I asked him whether such charges of rebellion, idolatries and apostasies were consistent with the possession of infallibility.

He naturally answered that he could not think that infallibility was consistent with rebellion, apostasy and idolatry.

This brought our argument to a close, with the remark on my part, that he must give up the notion of the infallibility of the Jewish Church, and, consequently, he must abandon his argument founded thereon, in favor of the infallibility of the Christian Church.

Infallibility has never been formally claimed by the Church of Rome, but it is advanced by all her advocates. Whenever their arguments from Holy Scripture fail them, they fall back on her claim to infallibility. This circumstance always forces this question prominently upon us.

I was once brought to this subject by a very astute man, who had failed in his argument.

As soon as he fell back on his assertion of the infallibility of the Church, I stated that I was prepared to consult with him the utterances of this infallibility, if he would but tell me where it was to be found. He had asserted the existence of an infallible tribunal or court of appeal from the language of Scripture, and it was necessary that we should know this court, that we might bring our case before it; so I asked him

where I was to find its decisions—that when Paul appealed to Caesar he well knew where his appeal was to be heard—that inasmuch as he, my friend, had referred his case to some court of appeal, which he declared to be infallible, it was an absolute necessity that I should know where that court of appeal was to be found, that I might follow the appeal and hear and know its decision on the question. I felt this was but reasonable.

He replied that he was aware there was a difference of opinion as to the seat of this court, on the locality in which it was situated, and on the judge who determined the appeal. Some, he was aware, held that it was in the Pontiff as successor of St. Peter—an opinion to which he confessed he could not agree—that others held that it was in general councils as representative of the episcopacy of the whole Church, a view which coincided with his own. He added that when there was a general council, especially when presided over by a Pope, or by a legate from the Pope, and when the decisions received the approval of the Pope, he thought there could be no fair exception against such decisions being received as infallible.

I therefore said, “you acknowledge that some of the best and ablest theologians of your Church, deny the infallibility of general councils, even, under the circumstances you propose; you admit that they refuse to recognize these as an infallible court of appeal. They name another altogether different, even the papal chalice itself; now, as both they and you follow your own private judgment in the matter, I see not why I may not follow mine also, and, with so many of your best and ablest theologians, refuse submission to the court which you suggest.”

He said at once that their unhappy divisions created a difficulty, he could not remedy it, he could deplore it.

I then said that supposing I consented to carry the appeal to the court of tribunal of general councils, as he proposed, I was anxious to know what it was that constituted the essentials of a general council and how many there were.

He replied that a general council was supposed to be an assembly of all the bishops of Christendom, a sort of parliament, or convocation of all the bishops of Christendom, but he could not answer positively, as to the number, as there was much difference among their theologians, some asserting there were sixteen, some fourteen, some twelve, and some only eight.

I said in return to this, that so wide a difference of opinion on so grave a question was very serious. You differ among yourselves as to how many councils are infallible as being general councils! I added that for myself I had no doubt whatever, for if a general council is a council of all the bishops of Christendom, assembled to consult and decide on the questions before them, there never has been a real general council in the history of the Church.

He asked me what I meant.

I replied that all the eight councils, usually called the first eight general councils, were held in the Eastern and not in the Western Church—in the Greek and not in the Latin Church. And that, although it was believed that in the first Council of Nice, there were some few bishops from the West, yet it is very certain that at the second of Constantinople, at the third at Nice, and the fourth at Constantinople, although all counted as general councils, there was not a single bishop from the Churches of Western Europe, and it is most uncertain whether there were any either by person or by proxy in any of the others! and thus these so-called general councils were not general councils at all, as representing *Universal Christendom*, inasmuch as the Western Churches were altogether unrepresented!

He answered that he was not disposed to dispute that fact, for that there were so many hundreds of bishops present at these councils, that on that account, even if on no other, they might well be regarded as general councils, even though they might not actually realize the ideal.

I said that we had scarcely entered upon the real difficulties of his hypothesis, which placed the Court of Appeal in the in-

fallibility of these assemblies. I had no wish to assign my reasons for my unfavorable opinion of the way in which every thing was managed in them. But I was obliged to ask on what principle some of these councils are received, and some of them rejected. I could myself, I said, reject them all, because not one of them responded to the ideal of a general council, but I could not comprehend the principal on which in the Church of Rome some are received, and some are rejected. It could not be the respect and reverence due to the number of bishops who were present, because those councils which were remarkable as having been attended by the largest number ever known in the history of the Church, are rejected and condemned by all writers in the Church of Rome, while some that were attended by comparatively few, are received and recognized as general councils! On what principle was this done? The council of Ariminum, with 400 bishops (A. D. 359), and that of Carthage with 562 bishops (A. D. 411), are both of them rejected, while the Council of Constantinople with only 150 bishops (A. D. 381), and that of Ephesus with only 200 bishops (A. D. 481), are received as general councils! Now if general councils are to be held as infallible, it seems necessary to determine with great accuracy, what constitutes a general council, seeing that the number of bishops does not do it.

My friend was evidently perplexed at this startling fact. He seemed not to have been aware of it, and like many others had been carried away by some ideal of councils, and hearing of such assemblies, had been at no pains to ascertain why some and not others were pronounced infallible, by being pronounced to be general.

I therefore called his attention to another difficulty, and that was how the judgment of the council was to be taken, whether by votes or otherwise. The importance of this will appear from the fact, that in some councils, as that of Constance (A. D. 1414), they voted by nations, and not by bishops, that is, each nation had one vote, no matter how many or how few were the bishops that belonged to it, so as that a

nation with only ten bishops in the council, had as effectual a vote as a nation with one hundred bishops, and thus the ten bishops' vote went as far as the hundred bishops' vote. In other councils they voted otherwise.

And then we may ask; whether the question is to be determined by the majority, especially by a bare majority, as in the council of 564 bishops, who divided so closely that there were 278 on the side of the Donatists, and 286 on the part of the Catholics—thus giving only a bare majority of eight in favor of the truth! But this was but the beginning of difficulties, as sometimes the decision seems to have been the wrong way, as in the Council of Seleucia, where 145 bishops voted for Arianism, and only 15 voted for the truth. This raises the question as to whether the infallibility goes necessarily with majorities, as in this case Arianism was decreed, and the Trinity condemned by an overwhelming majority. Nor did I see how we could expect it otherwise, as there are evils inseparable from all such assemblies, especially in ancient times, when long and distant journeys were dangerous. The bishops, whose age gave them wisdom from experience, and those whose piety made them love attendance on their flocks, and those whose gentleness recoiled from the stormy discussions of councils, and whose bodily infirmities all conspired to keep them from the councils, were absent, while the younger, more violent, more factious, and self-sufficient were able to accomplish the long and perilous voyage, and take part in discussions congenial to their passionate years. In such councils, it was the violence of youth, rather than the experience of age, determined every question, and it is therefore we are plunged into another inextricable difficulty by the fact that these councils have decided the same question in opposite and different ways. "One general Council at Constantinople, consisting of about 368 bishops, though others say there were only 350, maintained the worship of them, yet as soon as this was known in the West, how active soever the see of Rome was for establishing their worship, a council of about 300 bishops met at

Frankfort under Charlemagne, which condemned the Nicean Council together with the worship of images." Burnet, Art. xxii. The same spirit of contradiction prevailed afterward, when the two councils, held at Constance and at Basle, proclaimed the authority of councils to be superior to that of popes, while at the same period the two other councils, that were convened at the Lateran and at Ferrara, declared the authority of popes to be superior to that of councils! Contradictions like these are a simple confutation of their claim to being infallible.

Having pointed out these difficulties, I said that before we could consent to appeal to the infallibility of councils, it would be necessary to determine what constitutes a general council—whether there ever has been really a general council—how the infallible decision is to be arrived at, whether by majorities or otherwise—whether a small or bare majority can be supposed to carry the infallibility with it—whether the majority having voted the wrong way deprives it of its infallibility—whether seeing that councils have decided in opposite and different ways, we have any means of determining which decision is the voice of infallibility.

That my friend, though an astute and generally a very adroit arguer on the infallibility of the Church, was perplexed at these inquiries is a matter of no surprise to me. I have observed some of the ablest advocates of Rome, on subjects on which they believed themselves unassailable, completely defeated by being taken in flank, instead of debating the question in their accustomed way. My friend was literally helpless, and he could not help acknowledging that the subject was beset with difficulties which he had not anticipated. Councils were beset with difficulties and contradictions, popes were entangled in difficulties and worse than contradictions, while popes were opposed to popes, and councils were opposed to councils, and councils were against popes, and in their turn popes were against councils, so that all seemed to us as a chaos of inextricable entanglement, and amid, around, and above them all, was

that true infallibility, where was no contradiction—the infallibility of the God-inspired book, **THE HOLY SCRIPTURES**. This voice of infallibility is possessed by all our Protestant Churches. To this we appeal in all our controversies, and to this—**THE ONLY TRUE INFALLIBILITY**—we invite our opponents.

APPENDIX.

THE ANTIQUITY OF THE CHURCH.

The Question, Where was the Church before the Reformation answered—The Argument of Development considered—The new Creed of Pope Pius IV.—Its new Articles of Faith detailed—The Origin and Novelty of each Article illustrated—And the Novelty of the Religion of Rome demonstrated.

It is scarcely possible to converse with members of the Church of Rome on subjects of religion, without hearing much respecting the antiquity of their Church. It is supposed by many among them to be a point on which she is unassailable, especially when she is brought into comparison with the Church of England or any of the Protestant Churches.

In every class of social life, as in every part of the world, the question is often proposed to us :

WHERE WAS YOUR CHURCH BEFORE LUTHER ?

In Ireland, this question is usually answered by another—namely :

WHERE WAS YOUR FACE BEFORE IT WAS WASHED ?

The method of reply has certainly more of point than of elegance, and suits the lively temper of the people far better than some dry and erudite rejoinder. But, however, inelegant or vulgar it may be deemed, it contains the germ of the true answer—the fittest and most effective answer to the argument supposed to be involved.

The Church of England, as also the other Protestant

Churches, were, before the Reformation, in the same place as they occupy since that event. And the difference is not in the locality, nor in the identity, but in the fact—the very intelligible fact, that they had been unreformed and are now reformed—had been corrupted and are now purified—had been overlaid with errors and abuses, and are now cleansed. This is the real and only difference; it is not in their identity but in their state—not in their location, but in their condition.

When our Lord, as is narrated in the Gospels, entered the Temple at Jerusalem, we read, that he found it in a state wholly unbecoming its original and holy purposes; he found it practically a market-place, where there was buying and selling, and traffic, and money-changing. And although all this was introduced for the convenience of the worshipers, that they might have oxen, and sheep, and doves, which they could thus easily purchase for sacrificing, and that they might find no inconvenience from the want of money-changers to facilitate such purchases; yet, much as might be said of its convenience, it was regarded by our Lord as a perversion from its original design, and an abuse of its original use. It is written that he made a scourge of small cords; drove from the Temple those that bought and sold; overthrew the tables of the money-changers, and the seats of them that sold doves, and He told them that it had been designed as “a house of prayer,” and that they had made it “a den of thieves.” In all this He did not remove a pillar, nor change a column, nor destroy an ornament, nor close a window, nor impair the foundation. He left the Temple itself unchanged; He only removed the corruptions and cast out the abuses. Just so, the Temple after the Reformation was the same as before that event.

This was the REFORMATION of the sixteenth century.

When, in like manner, we repair any aged or venerable cathedral—when time has impaired its stability, and years have generated an accretion of decay, and the moss has covered its aged walls, and the mold has traversed its noble

arches, and the tendrils of the ivy have clasped its lofty pinnacles, and time is weakening its stately columns, and the worm is eating into its crumbling roof—when, anxious to preserve the venerable pile, we remove the moss that defiles it, the ivy that injures it, and the decay that is destroying its beauty and marring its usefulness, we are surely not changing the identity, or the purposes of the edifice—we assuredly are not removing its foundation, nor varying its architecture, but we are renovating the whole, and restoring the goodly fabric to its ancient beauty.

Such was THE REFORMATION of the sixteenth century.

That great event founded no new Church, and established no new religion in the world. As the very term implies, it was only a purifying the Church and religion of Christ from the corruptions and abuses which time and circumstances had introduced. It was emphatically a Reformation of the Church and of religion—it was not the invention of any thing new, but the reforming of the old.

This is the just, the only just view of the series of events connected with the Reformation; and to attempt to meet it by talking about the antiquity of the Church, or the antiquity of the error, or the antiquity of the religion—to attempt to meet it by thus talking about the antiquity of the system, is very little to the purpose. Buddhism and Hindooism, and the classic mythologies of Greece and of Rome, and the superstitions of Egypt, may claim a still higher and remoter antiquity. Mere antiquity in itself is nothing. And it were infinitely more satisfactory, and certainly more to the purpose, to prove that a Church is true than that it is old; and to show its religion to be conformable to the Holy Scriptures than that it is of ancient standing.

This argument, however, has lately undergone considerable change, and its new phases effectually annihilate all that was of any importance in its original form. The new phase is that which has received the name of DEVELOPMENT. The idea involved is, that originally in the Christian Church—in the Church of Christ, as taught by Himself, and as instructed

by His Apostles, and as built up by the primitive Christians—that in this, there was not the manifestation or development of the practices of the Church of Rome—that there were only the grains, or seeds, or germs, discernible in the early Church, from which in after-times these doctrines and practices have manifested and developed themselves; in other words, that transubstantiation, image-worship, Mariolatry, prayers to saints, worship of relics, purgatory, the sacrifice of the mass, indulgences, supremacy of Rome, and all her other peculiar doctrines and practices, are now in a state and condition widely different from primitive times—that now they are extended, enlarged, magnified, whereas formerly they existed only in the seed, or the bud, or the germ—that now they constitute the great and grand essentials of the Church of Rome, whereas, in primitive times, they were in abeyance, held back, concealed, veiled, reserved, and unseen, and unknown, and unbelieved, except by the initiated few—that thus all these doctrines in their present state are novel, at least different from former times; in other words, they were now an expansion, an enlargement, an exaggeration, a development of the past; or at least they are an un veiling of what was concealed before, and a teaching of what was untaught before. They assert, indeed, that the Church of Rome now holds nothing but what she held from the beginning; but only that she holds such things in a different way, and in a different degree, and to a different extent—that she held such things in primitive times in the germ, and that she holds them in the present age in their development; they were then the acorn, and are now the gigantic oak.

It may be seen that there is in the essence of this argument, all that neutralizes the old argument founded on the supposed antiquity of these doctrines and practices. It shows that they all have undergone a change, and that they are now in a state very different from formerly. Some may call this novelty, others may give it the fanciful name of development. It certainly is an admission of some change—a strange admission for a Church, for which its advocates claim the attri-

butes of unchangeableness, and the prerogative of infallibility.

The simple truth is, that the old claim to antiquity—the old argument, that her doctrines and practices were those of primitive Christianity, has been exposed and annihilated by the progress of modern research. Her advocates have been necessitated to retreat, and now endeavor to hide their retreat under the name of—development!

Nor could they do otherwise than retreat from this argument of antiquity. The advocates of Protestant Christianity laid before the world the three ancient creeds of the Churches—the Apostles' Creed—the Nicene Creed—the Athanasian Creed. They have shown these to have been the only Creeds of the primitive Churches, and they are acknowledged as such by all the writers of the Church of Rome. In these, the belief of the primitive Churches—in these, which embody all the articles of the faith of Christ as then received, and believed, and professed—in these there is no allusion whatever, no allusion however remote or shadowy, to any one of those doctrines which constitute the essence of the Church of Rome. These three creeds—the creeds of primitive Christianity contain no allusion to modern Romanism, no allusion to transubstantiation, Mariolatry, invocation of saints, worship of relics, Purgatory, sacrifice of the mass, indulgences, supremacy of Rome, etc.—but pass them by as if they had been utterly unknown, and unheard of, and unbelieved.

And the Church of Rome has felt the importance of all this argument, and she has compiled a new creed—A NEW CREED! Having examined THE NICENE CREED, and having seen that her new and favorite doctrines were not embodied in it, she went boldly to the work and has actually inserted them into it—has actually appended twelve new articles to this ancient creed to make it speak in her favor! This she did in the year 1564.

The following are the additional articles, thus newly invented, and then first inserted in the NICENE CREED.

I. "I most steadily admit and embrace apostolical and eccle-

siastical TRADITIONS, and all other observances and constitutions of the same Church.

II. "I also admit the Holy Scriptures according to the sense which our Holy Mother THE CHURCH has held and does hold, to which it belongs to judge of the true sense and interpretation of the Scriptures; neither will I ever take and interpret them otherwise than according to THE UNANIMOUS CONSENT OF THE FATHERS.

III. "I also profess that there are truly and properly SEVEN SACRAMENTS of the new law instituted by Jesus Christ our Lord, and necessary for the salvation of mankind, though not all for every one; to wit, baptism, confirmation, eucharist, penance, extreme unction, orders, matrimony; and that they confer grace; and that of these, baptism, confirmation, and orders, can not be reiterated without sacrilege.

IV. "I also receive and admit the received and approved CEREMONIES of the Catholic Church, used in the solemn administration of the foresaid sacraments.

V. "I embrace and receive all and every one of the things which have been defined and declared by the Holy Council of Trent, concerning ORIGINAL SIN AND JUSTIFICATION.

VI. "I profess likewise, that in THE MASS there is offered to God a true, proper, and propitiatory sacrifice for the living and the dead, and that in the most holy sacrifice of the eucharist, there is truly, really, and substantially, the body and blood, together with the soul and divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ, and that there is made a conversion of the whole substance of the bread into the body, and of the whole substance of the wine into the blood; which conversion, the Catholic Church calls Transubstantiation.

VII. "I also confess, that under either kind ALONE, Christ is received whole and entire, and a true sacrament.

VIII. "I certainly hold that there is a PURGATORY, and that the souls therein detained, are helped by the suffrages of the faithful; likewise that THE SAINTS reigning together with Christ, are to be honored and invoked, and that they offer

prayer to God for us, and that their RELICS are to be held in veneration.

IX. "I most firmly assert that the IMAGES of Christ, of the Mother of God, ever virgin, and also of other saints, may be had and retained, and that due honor and veneration are to be given to them.

X. "I also affirm that the power of INDULGENCE was left by Christ in the Church, and that the use of them is most wholesome to Christian people.

XI. "I acknowledge the Holy, Catholic, Apostolic, Roman Church for THE MOTHER AND MISTRESS OF ALL CHURCHES; and I promise true obedience to the Bishop of Rome, successor to St. Peter, prince of the apostles, and vicar of Jesus Christ.

XII. "I likewise undoubtedly receive and profess all other things delivered, defined, and declared in the sacred canons and general councils, and particularly by the HOLY COUNCIL OF TRENT. And I condemn, reject, and anathematize all things contrary thereto, and all heresies which the Church has condemned, rejected, and anathematized. I do, at this present freely profess and sincerely hold this Catholic faith, without which no one can be saved, and I promise most constantly to retain and confess the same entire and inviolate, with God's assistance, to the end of my life.

Such are the novel doctrines of the Church of Rome. They were not contained in any ancient creed—in any primitive creed of the primitive Churches, and therefore the Church of Rome has been obliged to invent a new creed to contain them, or rather she has interpolated one of the ancient creeds by the addition of these twelve novel articles. To this new compilation has been given the name—the expressive name of *the creed of Pope Pius IV.* It certainly is *not the creed of Christ's Church.*

And this new creed—this creed of the Roman Church, was first compiled in 1564! They sometimes ask—where was your Church before Luther!—where was your Church before Henry VIII! One might suppose that their own creed was

of some high and remote antiquity, when they propose such questions; although Luther was dead and buried, and Henry VIII. was gathered to his fathers, many years before this religion or creed of the Church of Rome was compiled!

But let us descend to details.

It has often been argued against me by the advocates of Rome, that if we have rejected her peculiar doctrines on account of their supposed novelty, we ought to be able to specify the precise time when each novelty was introduced into the Church.

I have always closed at once with my opponents on this argument, and have undertaken to prove the precise date of every doctrine. I have declared my willingness to do this, while at the same time I felt it was not necessary for my position. *A man is not to be supposed to have lived from the beginning of the world, merely because he can not prove the precise day of his birth.* And a doctrine is not to be deemed to have been from the beginning of Christianity, merely because we can not specify the date of its invention; indeed, we are warned that men "shall *privily* bring in damnable heresies," and we are fore-cautioned that they shall "creep in *unawares*," and we are reminded that it was "while men *slept* the enemy sowed the tares." These words imply that we should not be able to detect precisely the origin of error. But although we may be unable to ascertain the exact moment that gave birth to the error, yet we may be able to determine with exactitude the time when the error was formally adopted and recognized and avowed by the Church of Rome—when the error was no longer a floating and unauthorized opinion, but became adopted into the canons, and embodied in the formularies of that Church.

These may be considered *seriatim*.

I. Tradition.

The first article is on Tradition. It has been justly said of Tradition, that it is appealed to as the origin of every false religion, and for the support of every error engrafted upon

true religion. It was the argument of the advocates of the Greek and Roman mythology in defense of their system—it was the argument of the Jewish Pharisees in support of the continuance of their law—it was still the argument of the Brahmin in behalf of his Hindooism, and of the Buddhist in support of his Buddhism—it is the argument of all error against Christianity.

The doctrine, therefore, of the Church of Rome respecting Tradition can not be regarded as novel. It is as old as heathenism itself. But the adoption of the principle that tradition is to be placed on a level with the Scripture—that traditionary doctrines and practices are to be “received and venerated with equal piety and reverence,” with the doctrines and practices taught in Holy Scriptures—the adoption of this principle into the Church of Rome is undoubtedly a novelty. It never was affirmed till the Council of Trent in 1545. In all previous councils—in all those that had been held from the beginning of Christianity, it never before was asserted that the traditions of the Church were to be “received and venerated with equal piety and reverence” with the Holy Scriptures of God. And this novel article was then and there adopted for the first time in the history of Christianity, and then and there adopted for a purpose. They could not confute the arguments of the Reformers from the Holy Scriptures. They had nothing to advance but antiquated opinions which they said were traditionary: and to justify this, they framed and adopted this principle—this novel article of faith in 1545, and inserted into their creed in 1564.

The same may be said of her insertion of the apocryphal books into the canon. They never were received as inspired by the Jewish Church; they were on the other hand rejected as such, as Josephus testifies; they never were admitted into the canon of Holy Scripture, by the primitive Church, and they are excluded from each and every ancient list of canonical books, and it was never till the Council of Trent, in 1545, that these apocryphal books were received into the canon, and thence the article was inserted in the new creed in 1564, and

was so inserted for no better reason than the notion that they gave some color to one or two of the practices of the Church of Rome.

II. The interpretation of the Holy Scriptures.

This second article of the creed of Rome pledges its members to interpret the Holy Scriptures in accordance with the teaching of that Church, and only according to the unanimous interpretation of the Fathers.

This article thus bears on its face the fact that it was not composed or received till after the Fathers, that is, till after the primitive Church had passed away; and it goes on the assumption that the Fathers were unanimous in such interpretation, whereas there is no fact more certain than that upon all those portions of the sacred volume, upon which there is diversity of interpretation at the present day, there was as great and wide a diversity among the Fathers; so that if the members of the Church of Rome are bound to interpret Scripture only according as there is a unanimous interpretation among the Fathers, they will be necessitated to abandon all interpretation whatever, inasmuch as there is no unanimity among the Fathers. The celebrated text, "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it," is a remarkable illustration of this: for, as the Fathers differed among themselves as to the true purport of these words, so no Romanist, according to this article of his creed, has any right to give to these words any interpretation; and the discourse of our Lord in John vi. is another example, for the council itself has placed on record a statement that the Fathers were divided in their interpretation of it. The truth is, that the Fathers were as divided as ourselves, and there never existed among them any unanimity of interpretation.

This article was invented in order to counteract the reading of the Scriptures, now getting into circulation through the discovery of printing, and in order to counteract the use which the Protestants made of the sacred volume. It never was known or heard of in the Church of Christ till invented at the Council of Trent, and inserted in this creed in 1564.

III. The seven sacraments.

There are two sacraments received among reformed Christians. The Church of Rome holds that there are seven, by adding Confirmation, Penance, Orders, Matrimony, and Extreme Unction.

Confirmation is practically a useful custom among us, but has not the essentials of a sacrament. *Penance* was a custom adopted among the heathen, and is not peculiar to Christians, and certainly has not the nature of a sacrament. Repentance indeed, is a Christian grace, but not a sacrament. *Orders* is also held among us, but it has not the essentials of a sacrament. *Matrimony* commenced in Eden, and can not be a sacrament of the gospel, being long anterior to it. *Extreme Unction* is an abuse—a superstitious abuse of the rite of anointing the sick, originally used for the miraculous healing the sick according to the words, “they anointed with oil many that were sick *and healed them.*” It was in order to their miraculous healing. When the age of miracles ceased, this rite should also have ceased, but when superstitious persons saw that it wrought no good to the body, they sagely concluded that perhaps—possibly—may be—it did some unknown good to the soul; and thus it continues in the Church of Rome.

By means of these five pretended sacraments, added to the two real sacraments ordained by Christ, the Church of Rome has completed the number of *seven*. And yet that number seems unfortunate as being of all the most calculated to exhibit the novelty of the article, and the diversity of opinion alike. Ambrose, with a host of antiquity, declares that there are only *two* sacraments. Isidore avows his belief in only *three*, Alexander declares for *four*, an author named Cyprian asserts *five* to be the true number, of which one is *the washing of the feet!* Durandus declares for only *six*, rejecting matrimony as not a sacrament, and Peter Lombard teaches that there are *seven*.

This Peter Lombard was the first who ever taught that there were *seven* sacraments; he lived in the twelfth century. It

was not adopted, however, in the Church of Rome for three centuries afterward. This took place at the Council of Florence in 1439, from which it was adopted by the Council of Trent and inserted in this creed.

IV. Sacramental ceremonies.

It was a very strange idea to insert a clause into a creed making sacramental ceremonies an article of faith. It was the more strange as the ceremonies are confessedly of modern growth. The anointing with the oil of the chrism in *Confirmation* was no part of the original rite. *Confession* was originally public, and it was not till the fifth century that, owing to some awkward confession, which affected the moral character of one of the priests then officiating, it was suppressed, lest other similar confessions should lead to the publication of similar scandals. Private confession, or as it is called *Auricular Confession*, was then introduced. Private penances were never used till the seventh century, and their commutation for alms begun only in the ninth. As for the ceremonies connected with *Orders*, they were altogether unknown till the seventh century: and are not found in any ancient ordinal. The ceremonies connected with *Matrimony* need not be noticed, as in all countries they are variable. Those which accompany *Extreme Unction* were invented in the twelfth century, and were not settled till the fifteenth. Those connected with *Baptism* and the *Lord's Supper* are admitted by all parties to be many of them novel. As long as such arrangements are not unscriptural they may well be borne with, but it seems an intolerable thing to constitute them an Article of Faith. This was never done till this novel creed was compiled in 1564.

V. Original Sin and Justification.

The doctrines of the Church of Rome on these points are not liable to the charge of novelty. They made their appearance at the beginning. And St. Paul wrote his Epistles to the Romans and to the Galatians in order to confute and suppress them.

These doctrines were never avowed by any Council or any

authority till the Council of Trent. Indeed this seems admitted ; for the article of the Creed requires the belief, not of these doctrines as revealed in the Holy Scriptures, but only as defined by the Council of Trent. At least the creed demands no more ancient authority ; and certainly they were never embodied in any creed till 1564.

VI. The Mass and Transubstantiation.

And first, for the Mass. The practice of private masses, that is, masses for the priest alone, without a congregation, was unknown for many centuries ; and when it was first introduced, it was condemned by the Council of Metz in the ninth century, and did not become general till the twelfth ; and the doctrine that the Mass was a true, proper, propitiatory sacrifice for sin, was never adopted by any Council till that of Trent, in 1545, from which it was transferred to this creed.

And then, for Transubstantiation. The first book ever written in which the word "Transubstantiation" occurs, was in the tenth century ; and a certain Bishop of Autun has had the honor of the invention. This is admitted by our opponents ; but they hold that the doctrine which that word represents was of earlier origin. And this is true ; but it is apparent also, that the first book ever written in support of that doctrine, was that written by Paschase Radbert in 831. And this is admitted by all the ablest writers of the Church of Rome ; as also that the first time it was adopted formally and proclaimed authoritatively by that Church, was at the Council of Lateran in 1225.

VII. Half-communion.

The practice of Half-communion, or communion in one kind, in the bread without the cup, is of very modern origin ; some notice of its history will be found in one of the preceding conversations. All the writers of the Church of Rome acknowledge that it was not received before the twelfth century. "It appears," says Delahogue, the author of the theological class-book of the Roman Catholic College of Maynooth ; "that from the days of the Apostles until the twelfth century, the custom prevailed, that the Eucharist should be

received by the laity in both kinds, as is observed in the Greek Church at the present day; but from the twelfth century the custom of distributing the Eucharist to the faithful in one kind only was gradually confirmed."

This practice thus gradually became general, though with great opposition in some countries, till the Council of Constance in 1414, when, for the first time in the history of the Church, it was formally adopted.

VIII. Purgatory, Invocation of Saints, and Veneration of Relics.

This article contains three particulars.

First. Purgatory.

The nature and character of the doctrine of Purgatory is stated in the preceding conversations. Our present object is its origin; and it must at once be admitted that it is very ancient, having had its origin in the opinions of the heathens, who preceded the introduction of Christianity; when, therefore, the heathen in the time of Constantine made a formal profession of Christianity, not from any real reception of its truth, but in a desire to please the imperial court, they retained this and other of their heathen notions of religion. The introduction of a belief in Purgatory in the Christian Church thus was in the fourth century; it exhibited itself openly in the fifth, and seems to have been first taught publicly by Pope Gregory I., about the year 600. Monks and Friars soon found it an ample source of wealth, and therefore naturally became its most enthusiastic promoters. They found the gold of the alchemist in the fires of Purgatory!

Fisher, a Bishop of the Church of Rome, states, "the Latins did not receive the truth of this matter at once, but by little and little; nor indeed was faith in either Purgatory or Indulgence so necessary in the primitive Church as at present." This simple confession shows it was not formally received at first. Indeed it was for the first time formally pronounced a doctrine of the Church of Rome at the Council of Florence in 1489.

Secondly. Invocation of Saints.

The original of this practice is shown in the preceding conversations as found in the old mythology; and as such, being only a baptised heathenism, regarded and denounced as such by all the wise and good of the primitive Church. It is, therefore, clear that there is nothing to sanction it in primitive Christianity; and this is admitted by the learned of the Church of Rome. The Jesuit Salmeron confesses, that "it would have been a hard thing to impose on the Jews. And it would have given occasion to the Gentiles to think a multitude of gods was imposed upon them, instead of the multitude of gods which they had forsaken." And Delahogue says, "If many monuments of the invocation of saints are not to be found in the first and second centuries, that ought not to appear strange, for as persecutions were raging, the pastors of the Churches were more anxious to instruct and prepare the faithful for martyrdom than to write books." And thus the fact is admitted, however they labor for explanations, that this practice formed no part of pure and primitive Christianity.

It was a practice, however, that was introduced by the converts from heathenism, and so became very general, though never authoritatively sanctioned, but was adopted formally for the first time by the Council of Trent, in 1545.

Thirdly. The Veneration of Relics.

The impositions connected with this gross superstition have long made all good men ashamed of it, as a disgrace and scandal to Christendom. Its origin was superstition; its support, priestcraft; and its end, avarice.

IX. Worship of Images.

The learned Erasmus states, that "even to the times of St. Jerome those who were of the true religion would suffer no image, either graven or painted, in the Church; no, not even the picture of Christ;" and Delahogue admits that it was not allowed for three hundred years, lest it should look like the custom of the heathens, and seem to give a sanction to their images. This admission is sufficient to prove it was no part of pure and primitive Christianity. Cornelius Agrippa, another of their authors, honestly states—"The false religion

of the heathen has infected our religion, and brought images and pictures into the Church, with many ceremonies of external pomp, none of which were found among the first and true Christians."

Unhappily, in order to multiply the number of professed converts, the heathen were allowed to retain their ancient images. In many instances images of the heathen gods were baptized by the names of Christian saints, and were thus adopted into the Church. To restrain this evil, the Council at Constantinople, at which there were 338 bishops, condemned the use of images in the year 754, and ordered them to be removed from the churches; but shortly afterward, under the unholy influence of Irene, the practice was formally sanctioned and adopted at the Council that met at Nice, and at which 350 bishops were assembled, in the year 786. This was afterward condemned at the Council of Frankfort in 790, by 300 bishops. It was finally adopted by the Church of Rome, at the Council of Trent, in 1545.

X. Indulgences.

All the writers of the Church of Rome acknowledge indulgences as a modern invention, that is, that they were unknown in the primitive Church, and had their origin about the twelfth century.

Cardinal Cajetan states, "If there could be certainty arrived at about the commencement of indulgences, it would avail us much in finding the truth, but there is no authority of Scripture or ancient fathers, either Greek or Latin, that gives us any knowledge of them. And Alphonsus à Castro acknowledges, "There is nothing in Scripture less opened, and about which the ancient fathers have written less, than about indulgences, and it seems that the use of them came but lately into the Church." These admissions seem sufficient to prove the novelty of this article of the creed of Rome. Indeed, though very general in that Church from the twelfth century, and although they led to the first outbreak of the Reformation, yet they never were defined and sanctioned by any council till that of Trent in 1545. They were long before employed by the

popes for purposes of a financial nature, but they were never adopted formally and authoritatively by the Church of Rome till that council.

XL. The supremacy of the Church of Rome.

That this clause of the creed involves a positive untruth as a matter of historical fact, has been already shown in the conversation on the pretended supremacy of the Church of Rome.

That the Bishops of Rome should have been regarded as more than ordinary bishops is not improbable, considering that Rome was the capital city of the Western Empire, as were the Bishops of Constantinople, on account of its being the capital of the Eastern Empire. But as to either of them possessing authority or supremacy over the other bishops of Christendom, the thing never was thought of till the close of the sixth century, and then the claim was advanced, not by the Bishop of Rome, but by the Bishop of Constantinople! It was he who first claimed this supremacy, and so little was the rest of Christendom prepared for it—so little were the bishops of Rome prepared for such a claim on the part of any bishop in the world, that Gregory I., the then Bishop of Rome, declared the assumption of such a claim was a mark of the ANTICHRIST! He says in one of his letters—

“Saint Peter was not called a Universal Apostle, and yet, lo! my fellow-priest John seeks to be called the UNIVERSAL BISHOP! O tempora, O mores! Europe is now exposed a prey to the barbarians, and yet the priests, who should lay themselves in the dust, and weep and roll themselves in ashes, are seeking in a spirit of vanity, and boasting themselves in new-found and profane titles.” And in another epistle he says, “I have advertised him of *that haughty and superstitious title of UNIVERSAL BISHOP*, and that unless he reform it, he can have no place with us, for if there be any bishop so called, then must the universal Church fall to the ground, if he who is the universal bishop fall into error; may such folly never befall us!” And again, “I speak boldly, whoever calls himself, or desires to be called by others, UNIVERSAL BISHOP or priest, is the *forerunner of Antichrist*.” Such was the language of

Gregory the Great, who was at that time the Bishop of Rome. He little thought of the claims of his successors.

When, however, Phocas murdered the Emperor, the next Bishop of Rome claimed this very title of Universal Bishop, and Phocas applied all his imperial power to enforce the claim.

XII. The Council of Trent.

This clause of the Creed refers to the Canons of Trent, and is for that very reason an essentially novel article of faith. It could not have had existence before the close of that Council, and indeed, first found its place in the Creed of 1564.

Such are the twelve new articles of Faith—the articles which are to be found in no one ancient creed of any one of the Churches of Christ—the articles which are the distinctive peculiarity of the Church of Rome, and the essence of her religion—the twelve new Articles of Faith, which have been added to the ancient Nicene Creed, and form now the Creed of the Church of Rome. It was a Creed compiled many years after Luther was laid in his grave, after Henry VIII., was gathered to his fathers, and thus was by many years more novel and modern than the Reformation!

THE END.

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